Religio Bibliopolæ.

In Imitation of

Dr. Browns

RELIGIO MEDICI.

WITH A

SUPPLEMENT to it.

By *Benj. Argwater*, Gent.

LONDON,

Printed for *P. Smart*, and are to be sold at the *Raven* in the *Poultry*. 1691.

TO THE

READER

THE Author *of this Treatise not having leisure to finish this Piece as he intended, being call'd aside upon unavoidable Reasons, we have been compell'd to supply that Defect by another Hand, yet with all the care possibly to reach the* Air, *and* Stile *of the* Author, *which is of that neatness and facility as must needs recommend it (were there nothing else considerable) to the taste of such an* Age *as this. The* Method *being obvious and easy, the* Notions *bold and intelligible, and the* Whole *throughout acted with such a* Spirit *of Life and Vigour, as certainly can never fail of acceptation with the truly Learned and Ingenious.*

Under such Prejudices do we labour, and our conceptions of Things are for the most part so irregular and monstrous, that but to attempt our Delivery, and set us free from the slavish Power of Custom *and* Education, *wherewith we are so miserably involv'd, merits no small* Commendation, *tho the Success be unanswerable to the Undertaking: But to clear our* dim sight, *to take the Film from our Eyes, and place us in the open* Sunshine *of Reason, and true Judgment; to acquaint us with the* prerogative *of our own Understandings, and the due liberty and freedom of using them, is an* Atchievement *that exacts the highest Applause and Gratitude from the better and nobler part of Mankind.*

Hereby we are enabled to make a true Estimate of things, to divest them from all those foraign and spacious Accoutrements, *with which* Error *and* Mistake *have cloathed them. We shall then see things in their own native and naked Forms, and be able to reduce them to their true, and intrinsick Worth and Value.*

The greatest and most universal mischief Mankind suffers under, is the Delusion of a false and unrectifyed Imagination. This is

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an Error, *in the first* Concoction, *and gives a* Tincture *to all our Judgments, and a* Biass *to all the Actions of our Lives: The very* Ground *and* Cause *of all our Miscarriages. We derive false Conceptions from our* Cradles, *and suck it in with our Mothers Milk. Our* Nurses, *&c. destroy us in our very Infancy with their* Tattle *and Impertinence, which root themselves so deeply in our* Fancies, *that we can hardly, if ever, disengage our selves from them all our Life after. Hence we contract a* habit *of Laziness, and become fitly disposed to take things upon* Trust *and* Reputation, *to save the Charge of a little Examination, and Study: The Spring and Rise of all our late* Repentance, *and* Vexation.

Now the Business of this Author, *is to Instruct us how to become our own Masters, and to make use of those Faculties our* Creator *hath eudued us with, to those Ends and Purposes for which they were intended.*

The Reader upon the first View will find this Treatise to be an imitation of that exquisite Piece of Dr. Brown, *call'd* Religio Medici, *however without the least Presumption of reaching so brave an Original, tho not without the hopes of very nearly* Resembling *him*

him in some of his Noblest Flights and Excellencies.

The Principal Subject of the whole *is purely disputable, as being for the most part matter of* Opinion, *wherein it has ever been lawful to take which side we please: And tho he sometimes ventures upon* Mysteries *of an higher nature, yet he hopes 'tis done with that Reverence and Tenderness, as may render him at least excusable in that behalf. For notwithstanding, the Expression may appear* Dogmatical, *the Design is wholly an* Essay *and* Experiment, *and not to be taken for an* Arbitrary *and* Decisive *Sentence of those Matters.*

I shall forestall the Readers impatience *with no longer Harangue, not in the least doubting, but upon the first reading, his consent to, and Approbation of this Treatise, will be a sufficient Justification of the* Author, *and his Attempt.*

RELIGIO

RELIGIO Bibliopolæ.

THOUGH Trades (as well as Nations) have Scandals faſtn'd upon them in the Lump, yet there are ſome in all Profeſſions to whom the abuſive Character is not due. Booksellers in the Groſs are taken for no better than a ſort of [redacted]; (tho' thanks to our few Hundred among the Stars, 'tis only by prejudic'd men) yet among them there is a Retail of men who are no Strangers to *Religion* and *Honeſty*. I, that am one of that Calling, am bold to challenge the Title of a *Chriſtian*, neither am I aſham'd to expoſe my *Morals*.

I have no reason to tax my *Education*, or blame those who had the Care of my *Juvenile Years*. My Tutors were Learned and Orthodox, and made it their Business to *form my Mind*, and *square* my Soul by the best Precepts and purest Examples. Yet when I arrived at Years of maturer Judgment; I found occasion to prune my self, and lop off many Excrescencies; to wipe out the early Impressions of my Infant years, and unlearn the *Notions* I suck'd in with my *Mothers Milk*. Tho' there were no *Legends* in the Nursery, nor *Heresies* in the Schools where I was brought up: Yet my blooming *Phancy* was fertile in *Errors*, and sprouted forth in many *Luxuriant Thoughts*. It was the Task of my Riper Judgment to correct These, and reduce my self to the Standard of *Reason* and *Faith*.

Having therefore got the Weather-gage of *Youthful Mistakes*, by diligent Scrutinies, and proper Remarks; Having put in the Balance and weigh'd my *Native Religion* with all others that are extant, I now make that the Object of my *Choice*, which before was only the Effect of *Prepossession*; and as I was listed a *Soldier* of *Christ* in my *Baptism*, [redacted] a *Volunteer* in his *Service*: What was then done without my *Knowledge*, I now ratifie by my free *Consent*. And I resolve not to change my *Banner* as long as I live.

It is no *Solecism* in Divinity to say, That the *Prince of Peace* is the *Lord of Hosts*. The *Church Militant* is his *Army* composed of many

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Battalions, in different *Posts*, and under various *Orders*. So long as they all serve the great *Captain* of our Salvation, and practise well the Discipline of their Arms, I refuse not to give the word of *Peace* to any, let him be of what *Company* or *Troop* soever. The *variety* which we behold in the Universe is not its deformity, but its beauty. As the Eye is more *ravisht* with a Landskip which invites it with the grateful interpositions of Hills and Vallies, Woods and champian Grounds, than if it were let out to lose it self in the *Uniformity* of a waste Horizon or *empty Prospect*. So is the truly *pious Soul* more surpriz'd with the Glory of the Christian Religion when various apprehensions agree in the same *substantial Holiness*, (one Star differing from another in Glory,) yet all shining with a light borrow'd from the same *Fountain*. And doubtless he is the Man who is most likely to be a Member of the *Church Triumphant*, who cordially embraces with the extended Arms of good-will, who ever are dignifi'd with the Image of Piety, tho' not distinguish'd with his own *Superscription*.

I profess my self an impartial Lover of all good men, and do presume every man to be good till I find him otherwise. I have as little Zeal about things that are manifestly indifferent, (either *pro* or *con*) as any man in the World, for 'tis a Principle I receiv'd from my Education, that the real differences of good and intelligent People are not so wide as they seem, and that through prejudice and interest they do many

times conteſt about words, whilſt they do heartily think the ſame thing.

I am not fond of the Names which diſtinguiſh one Party from another in the *Church*. I eſteem not a man the better for being regimented in this *Communion*, rather than in that. And for ought I know in the *Camp* of *God*, a *Reformade* may be as acceptable, as in thoſe of Men. However a Mutineer in either is odious, and to raiſe *Factions* about *Religion*, is to adore *Mars* inſtead of *Chriſt*, and to commence a War for the ſake of Peace. I cannot approve of their bitter *Zeal*, who, if they cannot call down Fire from *Heaven*, will kindle it on the *Earth* againſt all that think not as they do. He is an ill Diſputant for Chriſtianity, who uſes no other Topicks than Gun-powder and Steel. *The Logick of* Mahomet *becomes not a Diſciple of Jeſus*; and I ſhould make but an Hypocritical Convert, were I to be *Dragoon'd* into *Religion* by the Domineering Arguments of *Booted Apoſtles*.

To perſwade to Conformity by Priſons and Confiſcations, is in my apprehenſion ſomething like demonſtrating a propoſition in *Euclid*, or apologizing by a Beetle and Wedges, and I conceive they will equally produce their Effects; when any *Mathematitian* ſhall do the one, the *Spiritual Court* may perform the other. We find few edified by a Dungeon, or inſtructed by the ſpoiling of their goods. *Force* hath as little power on Souls as a Chirurgions Knife on the Underſtanding and Affections of men: *Reme-*

Remedies must have some Analogy with the Sick and their Diseases. 'Tis found Reason (which is of our Essence and Constitution) with some little intermixtures of Kindness and Love, that must make men Proselytes to the Church of *England*, or nothing.

The use I make of this Variety in *Religions* is far different: *Truth* is *Homogeneous*, and attracts to it self all that is of its own *Nature*, whereso'ever dispers'd or separated, rejecting the rest as not pertaining to it. Thus I overlooking the *Errors* and *Mistakes* of those who differ from me, at the same time embrace their *Orthodox Tenets*, and shunning their *Vices*, I imitate their *Vertues*. This is to take Things by the right handle, and like the *Bee* to suck *Honey* out of every Weed. It is of the *Nature* of the *Sun*, who has commerce with many Pollutions, yet remains himself undefiled.

I abhor that mercenary Course of joyning my self with any *Party* of *Christians* that is uppermost, to abet the prevailing *Faction*, and assert the Opinions most in Fashion. This is to be a Weather-cock in *Religion*, pliable to every fresh Gale of *Interest*. Neither on the other side do I think it good Manners or Prudence to affront the *Religion* of the *State*, and by a sawcy Impertinence condemn those who worship *God* in the manner prescrib'd by the *Laws* of the Land. In my *Travels* I learn'd this *Moderation*, and he that knows not how to practise it, is not fit to stir out

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I do not take Prayer to consist in babling o're the devoutest *Collects* and *Oraisons* of the Church without a due *Application of Spirit*. This is the *Sacrifice* of Fools, without *Salt* or *Fire*; and therefore must needs be unsavory to *God*. The bended Knee, submiss Looks, and even a Body prostrate to the Ground, unless accompanied with a proportionate *Fervour* and *Humility* of the *Soul*, are but Religious *Compliments*, and a Pious *Banter*. Such Mock-Addresses, I doubt, are not graciously receiv'd in the Court of *Heaven*.

An equal dislike I have for those who offer up strange and unhallowed Flames; burning Incense, whose *Composition* is not warrantable; who hold not fast the *Form* of sound Words, but giving the Reins to their *Tongue*, suffer it to commit a thousand Indecencies in the Hearing of Him who made the Ear. These, as well as the Former, are

guilty of *Crimen læsæ Majestatis*; while they affront Heaven with *Tautologies* and vain *Repetitions*. The one through Inadvertency, the other through Presumption. This bringing *Form* without *Matter*, That offering *Matter* without *Form*; and Both wanting the *Spirit* and *Life* of sincere *Devotion*. Yet I neither censure such as use an *allowable Form*, provided it be accompanied with attentive Devotion: and less those who address themselves to Heaven in *words of their own choosing*, provided it be season'd with Discretion and a modest Sobriety of Spirit. For when a man fitly qualified, endued with Learning too, and above that, adorn'd with a good Life, breaks out into a warm and well deliver'd Prayer before his Sermon, it hath the appearance of a Divine Rapture, he raiseth and leadeth the Hearts of the Assembly in another manner than the most compos'd or best studied Form of words can ever do: And the Prayers who serve up all the Sermon with the same garnishing, would look like so many Statues, or Men of Straw in the Pulpit, compar'd with those who speak with such a powerful Zeal, that men are tempted at the moment to believe Heaven it self hath directed their words to them.

On the other side, I think not that to be the only Authentick *Prayer*, which is attended with Sensual Raptures, and melting Entertainments: This is but the Smoke of *Passion*, and soon vanishes; a mere Vapour or Ebul-

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For my own part, I can Pray Kneeling, Standing, or Sitting; either at my Business, or at my Repast; with or without Words and Ceremonies. And this I take to be the only Method of complying with St. *Paul's* Counsel, when he bids us Pray without ceasing. A swift and Pious *Ejaculation* many Times does the Office of a *multitude* of *Words* (tho' the most apposite and elegant in Humane Language) since *God* understands the *Dialect* of the *Heart* as well as that of the *Tongue*, being the Architect of both.

The Posture which *Pythagoras* enjoyn'd his Disciples, when they appeared before the *Gods*, was not without a *Mystery*. He bid them hold their Tongues revers'd; intimating thereby that they should observe a devout *Silence* in such Tremendous Company, and utter no Words which were not dipt in the *Heart*. And I could wish the Advice of *Solomon*, instead of a *Nosce Teipsum*, were engra-

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engraven on the *Frontiſpiece* of our *Churches*. "My Son, when thou entereſt the Houſe of "*God*, let thy words be few, and be more "ready to hear, than to offer the *Sacrifice* "of Fools. In all this, I aim at a *Devotion* that is Maſculine and Solid; Diſcreet and Humble, Sincere and Modeſt; full of *Primitive Reverence*, and the *Fervor* of the firſt Ages.

In proper ſpeaking our very ſilent Neceſſities are eloquent *Prayers*, and the wants which are hardeſt to be uttered, are ſuch a prevailing *Rhetorick with God*, as oft times bring down ſwifter Relief from *Heaven*, than our loudeſt *Letanies*. Even we our ſelves are more apt to diſpoſe of our Alms to a dumb Perſon, who by being diſabled to make his Addreſs any other ways than by mute Signs, does by that Pathetick kind of *Complaint*, challenge our *Charity*, than to the common Beggars, who make a Trade of Haranguing People out of their *Money*. Indeed every Innocent *Action* of our Lives is a *Prayer*: but the more extraordinary Performances of *Heroick Vertue*, pierce the Clouds, ſtorm the Regions above, and plunder *Heaven* it ſelf (if I may ſo ſpeak) of its choiceſt *Bleſſings*.

As to *Publick Prayer*, I own there is a Neceſſity of uſing ſome *Forms* and *Ceremonies*; and thoſe are the beſt which have the greateſt Efficacy to excite and regulate our *Devotion*. Not too Pompous and Theatrical, nor ſlovenly and mean, but ſuch as be

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come the *House* of *God*, and give it an external *Beauty* not a mere *Pageantry* of *Holiness*.

That Custom of the *Greek*, and other *Eastern Churches* to separate the Men from the Women in the Publick Assembly, seems to have something of *Antiquity* for its Plea, tho' the disuse of it in these *Western* Parts may make us think it a *Singularity*. I envy not that Sex the Liberty of Worshiping *God*, and being present at the *Publick Solemnities*; yet I grudge them a Priviledge which is so manifest an Impediment to our *Devotion*, as is their prating over the *Psalms*, *Responses* and other Portions of the *Common-Prayer*. I cou'd stand beside the fairest of that Sex in the *Church* unmov'd as Marble, their brightest Charms serving but as *Foils* to set off the incomparable Eminency of that *Majesty* and *Glory* who is adored in that Place. But when I hear them break the Bounds of *Female Modesty*, whose greatest Ornament is *Silence*; when I hear their Tongues running over the *Prayers* as loud, if not louder than the Men, either with a careless wantonness, or affected Gravity their Eyes divided betwixt an amorous Glance and a devout Ogle. This, I must confess, gives me Offence; 'tis an Obstacle to my Devotion, and makes me think the *Grecians* are not without Reason in assigning a particular Place of the *Church* to the *Women*, where they can neither be seen or heard. And this will

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not ſeem uncourtly or auſtere, if we remember that St. *Paul* himſelf has ſaid, I permit not a Woman to ſpeak in the *Church*. And in another Place, Let Women have Power on their Heads [that is, be covered or veiled] becauſe of the Angels, or as ſome interpret it, becauſe of the young men.

I wiſh for a purer *Reformation* in the *Church* than we have hitherto ſeen; yet I am not for tearing up *Chriſtianity* by the Roots. I could be glad to ſee the *Houſe* of *God* purged and cleans'd, the Building Repair'd and Beautified without Removing it from the *Foundations*. The Office of a *Biſhop* and a *Presbyter*, to me, ſeems no other ways differenc'd than thus; I look upon a *Presbyter* as a *Parochial Biſhop*, and a *Biſhop* as a *Dioceſan Presbyter*. Their Dignity equal in *Quality*, tho' not in *Quantity*. The one has Power of adminiſtring the *Sacraments* as well as the other: only for the ſake of *Order* and good *Government* in the *Church*, one is inveſted with a *Juriſdiction* and *Superiority*, of which the other is as capable, if duely Elected to it.

I envy not the *Biſhops* or *Ruling Presbyters*, their Temporal Honours and Riches, neither wou'd I be a Leveller in the *Church* of *God*: Yet it were a deſirable thing, if there were a more equal Diſtribution of Eccleſiaſtical Benefices, that the pooreſt *Preaching Presbyter* might have an Income that ſhould free Him from the Temptation of envying a *Journey-man Carter*, and other inferior Trades,

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who many times can boast of a larger Stipend than some of the *Ministry*.

Pluralities and Non-Residents were never heard of in the Primitive Ages, and it is a shame there should be so many fat Parsonages, and yet so many *lean Parsons*. It is the Devil's Market where Church-Livings are bought and sold, and such *Spiritual Hucksters* deserve to be whipt out of the *Temple*.

I refuse not to bow at the *Name* of *Jesus*, yet can give no Reason why I should not as well bow at the *Name* of *Joshua*, they being both one and the same in the *Hebrew*. And that Scripture, which is made to countenance this Ceremony, seems to me to speak no more than that in the Name of *Christ* all addresses should be made to *God* the Father. For if it were to be literally taken, why do they who do receive it, bow the *Head* instead of the *Knee?* Besides, I see no Reason why I shou'd not also bow at the Name of *Messias*, *Christ*, *Emanuel*, since the Redeemer of the World is called by all these *Names?* Nay, why should not I pay the same Reverence to all the *Names* of *God* in all Languages? especially to that tremendous Name *Jehovah*, which the *Jews* think it unlawful to utter? 'Tis true indeed, I can comply with the Custom of the *Church* in a thing not directly opposite to any positive Command, but I protest at the same time, my wishes are, that a Custom acknowledg'd to be indifferent, even by those who most zealously plead for its practice, were rather disus'd, than impos'd

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on men of *tender Conſciences*, ſince it gives ſo much *Scandal*, and has no *Authority* but that of *Tradition* to back it.

I am naturally a Lover of *Muſick*, and believe it has an efficacy in compoſing or ruffling the Spirits, according to the various kinds of it. But I find its moſt immediate Operation is on the *Phancy*, and ſenſual Affections, not on the *Superiour Faculties* of the *Soul*. And therefore I ſee no uſe of it in the *Church*, where we come not to pay Homage to *God* in the ſtrength of an exalted Imagination, or to preſent him with the *Firſt-Fruits* of our *Paſſions*, tho' never ſo refin'd, but to offer up our ſelves a *Living Sacrifice*, which is our Rational Service, ſince *God* is to be worſhip'd in *Spirit* and *Truth*, and not with aiery *Notions*, and carnal Raptures.

Tho' the *Ear* is a Member conſecrated to the Service of *Religion* ſince *Faith* comes by *Hearing*, yet I cannot obſerve that my *Faith* is at any time encreas'd by the moſt Harmonious Leſſons on the *Organ* or other Inſtrument of *Muſick* uſed in Divine Service. Neither do I admire at the Country-man's Freak, who the firſt time he had ever been in a Cathedral hearing the Organ ſtrike up, fell a dancing as tho' he had been in a *Muſick-houſe*. To ſpeak freely, I know not why we may not praiſe *God* as acceptably in a *Dance* as with *Muſick*, ſince the *Jews*, from whom we borrow our Arguments for the latter, did as uſually practiſe the former; there being but little uſe of the

one without the other. To me a Chapter in the *Bible* is the beſt *Muſick* in the World, and no Melody like that of a good *Sermon* where the Preacher like a skilful Artiſt reconciles the Diſcords of the *Law* and the *Goſpel*, and between the Emblems and Types of the one, and the Subſtantial *Truths* and *Myſteries* of the other ſtrikes up ſuch a grateful *Harmony*, as far exceeds the beſt Conſort in the World, tho' it were as charming as *Nebuchadnezzar's*, and made up of the whole Family of *Muſick*.

So I am a great Admirer of good *Painting* and *Sculpture*, yet can never find them Helps, but Hinderances to my *Devotion*, ſince it is impoſſible for the greateſt Maſter that ever profeſs'd thoſe *Arts*, to draw or carve to the Life, what was never expos'd to any of his Sences, or to contrive a *Figure* of that which has no Reſemblance, the *Inviſible Divinity*. Indeed a Man's own *Phancy* in ſuch Caſes is the beſt Painter; and if it be lawful to make uſe of any *Pictures* or *Images*, 'tis of ſuch as our own Imagination frames: yet this is the way to become *Anthropomorphites*, and worſhip *God* under the *Similitude* of a Man, or to follow the Pagan Vanities and adore Him under the likeneſs of a Beaſt, or ſome other ſenſible *Figure*, ſince all the *Ideas* of that *Mimick Faculty*, are but the Tranſcripts of External Objects, *Ariſtotle's* Maxim being truer of this than of the *Intellect*, That there is nothing in it which was not firſt in the *Sence*. The only way to

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have a true *Idea* of *God* is to ſuppreſs the Operations of this buſie *Faculty*, and by withdrawing into the moſt inward Receſs of the *Mind* there as in a *Mirrour* to contemplate that *Infinite Eſſence*, who is hid behind Himſelf (if I may ſo ſpeak) and cannot be diſcover'd but by his *Back-parts*.

It is with Pleaſure that I behold Him in his *Rays* which ſhine in all his works, and he has *caſt his ſhadow throughout the Univerſe*, but I ſhould be oppreſs'd with *Glory*, were I capable of fixing my Eyes on that *Abyſs* of *Splendors*, before which the moſt Illuſtrious *Spirits* in *Heaven* cover their Faces, as if they were aſham'd of their comparative Imperfections, and were not able to behold that Original and Increated *Purity* without a Bluſh.

I have no ambition to become an *Eagle* in *Divinity*, neither do I emulate the towring Flights of ſuch as pretend to extraordinary *Revelations*. I had rather walk under the *Piazzas* of *Gods Church*, than on the *Battlements* of the *Devils Chapel*, leſt my Head ſhould grow giddy with *Enthuſiaſms*, and I be blown off from thoſe Heighths and Pinnacles with ſome wind of vain Doctrine. That Father of the *Arrian* Hereſie was an *Icarus* in *Religion*, he had lofty Thoughts and ſoaring Speculations, but he flew without a Guide, he forſook the Path of his *Mother* the *Church*, his Wings melted, and he had a terrible *Fall*, which at once bereft him of his *Life*, and ('tis to be fear'd) of his *Salvation*.

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I take great Pleaſure ſometimes to find my ſelf entangled in *Difficulties* and *Dangers*, out of which I have no *Skill* to extricate my ſelf. I never think my ſelf ſafer than in ſuch a *Labyrinth* of thwarting Events, as no *Clue* of my own Reaſon or Experience can lead me out. 'Tis then I can be chearful and triumph, knowing my Deliverance is near at hand. And herein lies the *quinteſſence* of my Comfort, that I am thus particularly, and demonſtratively aſſur'd of the Divine *Favour* and *Protection*, ſince nothing below a *Miracle of Providence* could untie ſo knotty a juncture of *Misfortunes*.

Were all the Paſſages of my *Life* publiſh'd, it wou'd be taken for more than a *Romance*. It is ſo full of Adventures which ſurpaſs the ſtories of *Gyants*, *Monſters*, *Enchanted Caſtles*, and the whole Syſtem of *Knight Errantry*. Such ſtrange and unexpected Eſcapes as I have made from the very Jaws of *Death*, exceed the Fables of *Poets*. And had I no other Reaſon but the Remembrance of my own *Perils* and *Deliverances*, it were more than enough to convince me of an unerring Eye that watches over *Mankind*. This makes me chearful and eaſie in all humane Circumſtances, and reconciles me to the *Stoicks*. I look on all things to be govern'd by a fix'd *Law* and Eternal *Deſtiny*; and therefore cou'd quietly ſit down with *George Withers*, and ſay, *Nec habeo, nec careo, nec curo.* I conſider my ſelf as a *Part* of the *Univerſe*, and therefore am never troubl'd at any thing which happens to me, ſince it comes not to paſs with-

without the Knowledge and Will of him who in all his Diſpenſations has Regard to the *Good* of the *Whole*; from which I am not excluded as a *Member*, and therefore muſt needs participate of the *Common Benefit*, even when I think I ſuffer *Damage*. I am not peeviſh at a Calumny, nor waſpiſh at a loſs. When any one does me an Injury, I take a ſingular Pleaſure in forgiving him. There is ſuch a Noble *Pride* attends this generous *Conqueſt* of an Enemy, as far ſurpaſſes the celebrated ſweetneſs of *Revenge*. I hate to gratifie my *Paſſion* the *common way*; and becauſe he has acted the part of an ill Man, I muſt do ſo too or worſe, by giving ſcope to my *Rage*, and executing the ſevereſt Dictates of my *Fury*. He is but a *Tinker* in *Morality*, who to repair one Breach makes another, and perhaps wider than the firſt. Beſides, 'tis the moſt profitable kind of *Revenge*, when I turn a *Wrong* to an *Advantage* by cancelling it: ſince thereby I make a *Friend* of an *Enemy*, and if he have but the leaſt Spark of *Gratitude* and *Vertue*, my Benignity makes him not only bluſh at his Offence, but puts him upon ſome ingenuous ſtudy how to make me amends.

Hath any *wrong*'d thee? (ſays * *Quarls*) be *bravely* reveng'd, ſlight it, and the work's begun, forgive it and 'tis finiſh'd. *He is below himſelf that is not above an Injury.*

* See his Encheridion.

If thy Brother hath privately offended thee reprove him privately, and having loſt him-

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ſelf in an Injury, thou ſhalt find him in thy forgiveneſs. *He that rebukes a private fault openly ſordidly, betrays it rather than reproves it.* The true way to advance anothers Vertue is to follow it, and the beſt means to cry down anothers Vice is to decline it.

Have any *wounded* thee with *Slanders*? meet them with Patience, haſty words *rankle* the wound, ſoft Language dreſſes it, forgiveneſs cures it, oblivion takes away the Scar. It is more noble by ſilence to cover an Injury, than by *argument* to overcome or ſpread it. But in all caſes of this nature change conditions with thy Brother, then ask thy Conſcience what thou would'ſt be done to, being reſolv'd, exchange again, and do thou the like to him, and thy Chriſtianity ſhall never err.

I eſteem it one of the moſt ſubſtantial Exerciſes of *Religion*, to ſubdue our *Paſſions*: and becauſe *Anger* is the moſt violent and precipitate, I uſe my moſt ſtrenuous Endeavours to ſtifle this in its *Embryo*. Other *Paſſions* take a gradual Riſe, and inſinuate by ſteps, but *Wrath* like *Gun-powder* takes *Fire* all at once, and blows a man up before he can look about him. Therefore I have by long and aſſiduous Practice labour'd to get the Victory of this turbulent Affection, and I count it the *Maſterpiece* of Humane Wit to be above all *Provocation*. I cou'd long ago ſtop my Hand in the midſt of its *Career*, when aim'd at a faulty Servant, or ſcurrilous Companion, but now I can bridle the *Nerves* which wou'd

have ſtretch'd it forth, and curb the officious *Spirits* which were ſo ready to ſally forth on ſuch an Occaſion. I ſcorn to ſuffer my *Tongue* to be my *Hand's Deputy*, and to laviſh out in unſeemly Expreſſions, as if the Height of Man's Wit and Valour lay in a biting *Repartee*. Nay, I will not permit ſo much as my *Cheek* to change colour, my *Eye* to ſparkle, or any other part of my Face to receive the leaſt impreſſion of my *Reſentments*, whereby it may be perceiv'd that I am fermented. Yet at the ſame time I am not inſenſible of an *Affront*, nor void of due Reflexion on it. All that I aim at is to comply with the *Apoſtles* Advice, *To be angry and not to ſin.*

I have no Pannick Fears of *Death* upon me, neither am I ſollicitous, how or when I ſhall make my *Exit* from the Stage of this *Life*. Much leſs do I trouble my ſelf about the manner of my *Burial*, or to which of the *Elements* I ſhall commit my *Carkaſs*. I envy not the *Funeral State* of Great Men, neither do I covet the *Embalming* of the *Egyptians*. I wonder at the Phancy of thoſe who deſire to be impriſon'd in leaden *Coffins* till the *Reſurrection*, and to protract the *Corruption* of their Fleſh, out of which they ſhall be generated *de Novo*: as if they dreamt of riſing whole as they lay down, and carrying *Fleſh* and *Blood* into the *Kingdom* of *Heaven*, without a *Change*.

For my Part I admire the *Indian Obſequies*, and were it not againſt the long eſtabliſht Cuſtom of my *Country*, wou'd ſooner bequeath my Body to the *Fire*, than be *inhum'd*, that ſo I might be ſooner reſolv'd into the *Elements* of which I was firſt compounded.

Yet inſtead of that nearer way to Diſſolution, I can be contented to undergo the tedious Converſation of *Worms* and *Serpents*, thoſe greedy *Tenants* of the *Grave*, who will never be ſatisfied till they have eat up the *Ground-Landlord*.

I do not puzzle my ſelf with projecting how my *ſcattered Aſhes* ſhall be collected together, neither do I for that Reaſon take Care for an *Urn* to encloſe them. I am ſatisfied, that at the laſt *Trumpet*, I ſhall riſe with the ſame *Individual Body* I now carry about me, tho' there may not then be one of the ſame *Individual Atomes* to make it up, which are its preſent Ingredients. For neither are they the ſame now as they were twenty years ago. Yet I may be properly ſaid to have the ſame *Individual Body* at this Hour, which my Mother brought forth into the World, tho' it is manifeſt, that there is ſo vaſt an *Acceſſion* of other *Particles* ſince that Time, as are enough to make *Ten* ſuch *Bodies* as I had then. Which implies ſuch a perpetual *Flux* of the former, as 'twould be a *Solaciſm* in *Philoſophy* to think I have one of my *Infant Atomes* now left about me.

If after all this, I may be ſtill ſaid to have the ſame *Individual Body* as I had then, tho there be not one of the ſame *Individual Atomes* left in its *Compoſition*, why may we not aſſert the ſame of the *Bodies* we ſhall have after the *Reſurrection*? *Matter* is one and the ſame in all *Bodies*, the *Individuation* of it, the *Meum* and *Tuum* proceeds only from the infinitely different *Forms* which actuate it. Thus when my *Soul* at the *Reſurrection* either by its own *Energy*, or by the Power of *God*, and Aſſiſtance of *Angels*, ſhall be reinveſted with a *Body*, it is proper to ſay it will be the ſame *Individual Body* I have now, tho' made up of *Atoms* which never before were Ingredients of my *Compoſition*, ſince not the *Matter* but the *Form* gives a Title to *Individuation*.

I am the more willing to believe this will be the manner of our *Reſurrection*, becauſe I think it not Decorous to put the *Angels* on the Drudgery of *Scavengers*, as if it ſhould at that Day be their Employment to ſweep the *Graves* and *Charnel-houſes*, to ſift the *Elements*, and take in all the *Receptacles* of the *Dead* for Mens divided *Duſt*. Not that I think it impoſſible for *God* even this way to accompliſh the *Reſurrection* of the *Dead*; tho' the *Bodies* of all Mankind were crumbled into *Duſt*, and that Duſt ſcatter'd before the *Wind*, or diſſolv'd into *Water*, or attenuated into *Air*, tho' thoſe Bodies were eaten by the Beaſts of the *Earth*, or the Fiſh of the *Sea*, and

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thoſe Beaſts and Fiſh eaten again by Men. Tho' they ſhou'd undergo all theſe Changes and Tranſmigrations, yet were they ſtill in the great Repoſitory of *God*. The whole *World* in this ſence being but as one great *Store-houſe*, and all the *Elements* as ſo many *Cells* therein, ſo that whereſoever we ſhall be laid up, whether in the Bellies of *Fiſhes*, Entrails of *Beaſts*, or by various Alterations become the *Food* of *Men*, yet the Great *Architect* of all Things knows where to find our ſcatter'd Remnants. But why ſhould we engage Him in ſo infinite a Task, when the Work may as well be done a nearer way? And put him to the Expence of multiplying *Miracles*, when fewer will ſerve the turn? When the Grand Alarm is given, He can ſoon fit our *Souls* with proper Matter for their future *Bodies*, out of the *Elements*, as well as out of their own *Antiquated Embers*. The *Jewiſh Rabbins* ſeem to deny the gathering together our diſpers'd *Aſhes*, and aſſign the Trouble to a certain *ſmall Bone* in every Man's Back which they ſay, never ſuffers any *Putrefaction*, but remaining to the laſt Day in its Primitive Conſiſtency, impaſſible and incorruptible, is then impregnated by a *Dew* from *Heaven*, which diffuſing its *Vertue* like a Ferment, not only animates and quickens this *Seminal Bone*, but alſo attracts all the *Atomes*, which formerly conſtituted the *Body*, tho' diſpers'd in the remoteſt *Corners*, and moſt hidden *Receſſes* of the *Univerſe*,

marſhalling them in the ſame *Order* as they had before their *Diſſolution*, and ſo in a moment recovering the *Body* to its *Primitive State*. But theſe are groſs Conceipts for *Chriſtians* who believe that our *bodies* ſhall in that great and *Final Change* become *Spiritual* and *Immortal*, being for ever diveſted of all the *peculiar Circumſtances* of Fleſh, and Blood.

Let the manner be how it will pleaſe *God*, I am raviſh'd to think what a bright and ſerene *Morning* the *Reſurrection* will prove after the long *Night* of *Death*, and the languiſhing ſlumbers of the *Grave*! How vigorous and active we ſhall riſe from our Beds of *Darkneſs*, how merry and blithe from the melancholy Regions of *Horror* and *Silence*! More ſprightly than Youth; ſtronger than Lyons; and ſwifter than Eagles! Full of Light, full of Joy, we ſhall ſoar aloft, and like well-mounted Travellers poſt it away through the *Balmy Air*, and liquid *Skies*, till we arrive at the Place of admirable *Manſions*, and be welcom'd to the *Houſe* of *God*.

I dare not with ſome of the *Jewiſh Rabbins* ſay that all ſhall not riſe at the great *Day*; much leſs will I preſume with others to particularize ſo far as to exclude all thoſe who periſh'd in *Noah*'s Flood; or with a third ſort to confine the *Reſurrection* to the *Children* of *Iſrael*, as if we that are of the *Gentiles* were not capable of it as well as they! But above all I reject the Cenſure of the

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Talmudiſts, who ſay, that neither *Bilha* the Concubine of *Jacob* that lay with *Reuben*; nor *Doeg* that cauſed *Saul* to kill *Abimelech* and the Prieſts; nor *Gehazi* the ſervant of *Elijah* the Prophet, nor *Achitophel*, *David*'s prime Miniſter of State, ſhall riſe from the Dead. Theſe are the Memoirs of *Hebrew Superſtition*; Invidious Remarks the peculiar *Hereſie* of that over-weening *Nation*.

Yet I am more ſcandaliz'd at ſome *Chriſtians* who will not allow *Salvation* to any man that is not within the *viſible Pale* of their *Church*, as if the Eternal *Sun* of Juſtice were Eclips'd to all that are out of their narrow *Horizon*. Surely He enlightens every man that comes into this *World*, and his *Rays* are not confin'd to *Countries* or *Parties*. He ſhines Univerſally, and no man can trace him in the *Zodiack* of his Mercy.

I dare not 'tis true, (with *Juſtin Martyr*) canonize the Philoſophers, and place *Socrates* and *Heraclitus* in *Heaven*; neither am I ſure that *Ariſtotle*, by his learned Treatiſes of *Heaven* has obtain'd an Inheritance there himſelf. 'Tis too officious a Regard, and too bold a Charity, thus happily to diſpoſe of *Particular Men*. On the other ſide I dread to paſs the Sentence of *Damnation* on all the *antient Pagans*, and to aver that none were ſaved that died before the fifteenth year of *Tiberius*. Tho' the mere Light of *Natural Reaſon*, was not ſufficient to conduct them, nor all their *Morality*, enough to entitle them

them, to *Supreme Felicity*; Yet I cannot be perſwaded that the infinite *Goodneſs* would doom the vertuous *Gentiles* to the *Abyſs* of *Miſery*. Neither can any man demonſtrate, That *Chriſt* was not the Light of the *Gentiles* before his Incarnation, as well as after; And ſince *Abraham* ſaw his Day and was glad, how do we know that *Plato*, *Solon*, *Lycurgus*, *Pythagoras*, *Cyrus*, and other wiſe Law-givers, Philoſophers and Kings, men renown'd for their *Prudence*, *Temperance*, *Fortitude*, *Chaſtity*, *Liberality*, and the like Vertues might not alſo be favour'd with a glimpſe of the *Meſſias*, *the deſire* of *all Nations*, before he appear'd in the Fleſh. Tho' we have no Records in *Scripture* of *Hermes Triſmegiſtus*, *Zoroaſter*, *Phocilides*, *Homer*, *Theognes*, *Epictetus*, *Theſeus* and *Hercules*, yet we cannot be aſſured, but that they had *Faith*, and expected the *Redeemer* to come, as well as *Job*, who was not of the *Holy Line*, but a *Branch* of the *Gentiles*.

When I conſider what Pains ſome of the wiſer *Heathens* have taken to find out the Truth; when I contemplate a *Pythagoras* travelling through *Aſia*, and particularly converſant in *Paleſtine*; an *Empedocles* Journeying into *Africk*, to learn the Wiſdom of the *Ægyptians*; an *Alexander* the Great falling at the Feet of the *Hebrew High-Prieſt*, I cannot think the *Heathen World* to be ſo ignorant of the true *Religion*, as is commonly imagin'd. They had a *Balaam* to inſtruct them,

them, the *Sybills* to guide them to the Knowledge of a future *Messias*, and for ought I know, some of them might have the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament too, or at least a good part of them, even before that celebrated Translation of the *Septuagint* was extant; since it was easie for those *Gentiles* who had Commerce with the *Jews* to procure Copies of their *Law*, especially when they were made Captives in *Media*, *Assyria*, *Ægypt* and *Babylon*.

An *Esther* lying in the Bosom of *Ahasuerus*, a *Daniel* sitting at the Right Hands of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Belshazzer*, and *Darius*, had fair Opportunities of instructing those *Heathen Monarchs* in the *Mysteries* of the *Mosaick Law*, and surely such Holy Persons wou'd never neglect so noble a Work as proselyting the Kings and Princes of the *Gentiles* to *God*.

In the Days of *Solomon* the Fame of the *Jewish Nation* had reach'd the utmost Parts of the *Earth*, *Kings* came from far, and *Queens* from the remotest Borders of the *Continent*, to be the *Disciples* of that Royal *Philosopher*, and Spectators of the *Hebrew* Grandeur. How could then the *Divine Oracles* be hid from the *Gentiles*, or the *Sacred Tradition* of *Shiloh* to come, not be deliver'd to the inquisitive *Nations* of the *Earth*! Without doubt the *East* saw the dawning of the *Star* of *Jacob*, and the *South* could calculate his *Meridian*, even before he rose. Neither were

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the *North* and the *West* without ſome glimmerings of his Appearance.

The *Wiſe Men* that came to adore him at *Bethlehem*, perform'd but the Wiſhes of their *Fathers*, and the *Eunuch* of Queen *Candaces* made no Scruple to become a *Chriſtian*, when *Philip* had convinc'd him that *He* of whom the *Prophets* had ſo long foretold, was now come in the *Fleſh*. Surely he was *the deſired of Nations*, the *Hope* of the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Glory* of his People *Iſrael*. Therefore I cannot number it among the Commendations of *Chriſtianity*, that a great Part of thoſe who profeſs that *Name*, are ſo preſumptuouſly uncharitable, as to damn all that were not of the Seed of *Abraham* before *Chriſt* came in the Fleſh, as if Salvation were entail'd to one *Family*, and no man cou'd go to *Heaven* that was not circumcis'd.

Much rather had I believe, That in the very Inſtant of Death, *God* reveal'd the *Myſtery* of *Redemption* to many innocent and vertuous Perſons among the *Gentiles*, and infus'd a ſaving *Faith* in *Chriſt* into their Souls, at the very moment that their Sences were forſaking their Bodies. Supplying their want of *Scripture* or *Tradition*, with the inſpiration of his *Holy Spirit*, when they were taking the laſt gaſp, and breathing out their *own*.

Or if this be not thought ſufficient, I will believe, That when *Chriſt* deſcended into *Hell*, he preach'd the *Goſpel* to the *Spirits* which were there in Priſon, not only thoſe who were

were disobedient in the days of *Noah*, but all such of the Race of *Noah*, as by compleating the Measure of their Sins, had sunk themselves into that fatal *Place*, whether they were *Jews* or *Heathens*. And I cannot understand those *Texts* of *Scripture* which mention his spoyling of *Hell*, and leading *Captivity Captive*, if they may not be applyed to his *Triumphant Deliverance* of some of those *Souls* which were shut up in the *Infernal Caverns*. Neither do I perceive any *Heresie* in believing, there might be some Vertuous *Heathens* in the Retinue he carried with Him from thence to *Heaven*, as well as some of the Sons of *Israel*. However, leaving the manner of their Salvation to *God*, I will conclude, That it is unreasonable, uncharitable, and has too much of the *Jew* in it, to pass the Sentence of *Damnation* on all the *Gentiles*, since the *Holy Ghost* has assured us, That *God* is no Respecter of Persons, but he that in every *Nation* fears Him, and works Righteousness, is accepted of Him.

Besides, methinks if matters were brought to the severest Ballance, it would not appear Heterodox to say, That as all men sin'd in *Adam*, without their own Personal Knowledge or Consent, so some might be saved in *Christ*, even without a Particular and Personal Belief in Him, of whom perhaps they never so much as heard.

Some Grains of Allowance may be given to the involuntary *Frailties* of *Humane Nature*, some

ſome Indulgence granted to the invincible *Ignorance* of a great Part of *Adam*'s Poſterity, who if they knew not the *High-way* to *Heaven* which was reveal'd to their Brethren the *Jews* and *Chriſtians*, might yet be conducted thither by ſome By-Path, ſince it is too narrow a Conceit of *God*'s Mercy to think, that becauſe he had chiefly manifeſted it in the Royal Road of the *Law* and the *Goſpel*, therefore he cou'd never go out of the beaten Track. This were to retrench the *Divine Prerogative*, and to tye Him up to limited Conditions, whoſe Ways are in the Great Deep, and whoſe Foot-ſteps no Created Being can Trace.

The Satisfaction I have of the *Soul*'s *Immortality*, if it amounts not to a Demonſtration, may yet be numbred among thoſe *Proleptick Ideas* that need none, as being ſelf-evident. It is a Parallel with firſt Principles, and has equal Force on my Underſtanding; for I am not more convinc'd, *That one and two make three*, than *That the Soul of man is Immortal*. So that I make it not ſo much an *Article* of my *Faith*, as a *Propoſition* of my *Reaſon*, and a Concluſion of *Science*. Yet I do not always go ſo far round about, as by a long Train of Logical Deductions and Inferences, to diſpute my ſelf into the Remembrance of my *Immortality*. This indeed were neceſſary to perſwade another, but I have a nearer Method to comfort my ſelf with the Demonſtration of this *Noble Truth*, while it becomes an Object of my

my very *Sence*, and I can feel that *Immortality* in my ſelf, which my *Reaſon* tells me another is poſſeſs'd of as well as I. This is eaſier to be experienc'd, than utter'd in words, 'tis an *Art* not to be acquir'd without aſſiduous *Reflection* and ſtrict *Animadverſion* on our own Thoughts. But the *Fatigue* is more than recompenc'd with the ineffable *Pleaſure* that attends it, for when by a long and often repeated Practice, a man has found the way to keep cloſe Pace with his own *Intellect* in all its *Flights* and abſtracted *Starts* from the *Body*, when he can ſtand on the Brink of the *Immaterial World* and perceive what is before Him, perceiving alſo that he perceives it, then 'tis he enjoys *Heaven* by Anticipation, and foreſtalls his *Future Beatitude* by taſting *Immortality* at preſent. He is riſen from the Dead, before he dies; and lives an *Eternity* of Ages in a *Moment*. Neither is this a ſleeping *Chimera*, or a waking *Dream*, but a real Truth, which as I have ſaid, is eaſier practiſed than expreſſed.

It was but a drowſie Conceit in thoſe Fathers, who phancy'd the *Soul* ſhou'd ſleep in the *Grave* till the *Reſurrection* of the *Body*. Had they well traced the *Nature* of a *Spirit* from its firſt Principles, they wou'd not have provided a *Dormitory* for That *Being* which wou'd ceaſe to *be*, ſhou'd it ceaſe to *act*, ſince its very *Eſſence* implies a Contradiction to *Reſt*. I cou'd as eaſily and with equal Reaſon believe it will be *annihilated*

at

at its ſeparation from the *Body*, or at leaſt that it ſhall be *metamorphos'd* into ſomething elſe, ſince if it continue the ſame it was before the Diſſolution of the *Body*, it muſt continue to think, it being indeed nothing elſe but a pure *Thought*; and how a *Thought* can take a Nap, is beyond the Verge of my *Philoſophy* to apprehend, neither do I know of any thing in *Divinity* that ſeems to countenance ſo dull a *Theorem*. As for thoſe Texts of *Scripture*, which ſeem to adumbrate the Supreme Felicity of the *Saints* by the Notion of *Reſt*, I do not think they mean a Ceſſation of the *Souls natural Energy*, for how could it then be capable of that *Seraphick Love*, and *Joy* in the *Beatifick Viſion*, which is the chief Entertainment of the Bleſſed in *Heaven?* It ſeems rather to intimate the *Soul's Eſcape* and *Deliverance* from the Troubles and Inquietudes of this *Mortal Life*, which may very well be call'd a *Reſt*, and yet be conſiſtent with an *Activity* far ſurpaſſing that which it was endued with in the *Fleſh*. The *Scripture* clothes many abſtruſe *Myſteries* in familiar Dreſſes, the better to accommodate Them to the Conceptions of vulgar and ignorant People, who make up far the greateſt Part of *Mankind*, and we muſt not expect the rigid Definitions of *Ariſtotle* from the Sacred *Pen-Men*. But when we come Scientifically, and according to the Method of the Schools to treat of the *Natures* of Things, we ought to fit them

them with proper and Intelligible Terms, and purſue their *Eſſences* by a continued Progreſs, not by wild Fits and Starts.

I have but ſmall acquaintance with the *future State*, but this I'm ſure there will be no change that will be ſo ſurprizing to me as that by Death. It is a thing of which I know but little, and none of the millions of Souls that have paſt into the *inviſible* World, have come again to tell me how it is.

I.

It muſt be done (my Soul) but 'tis a ſtrange,
A Diſmal and Myſterious *change*, Norris.
When thou ſhalt leave this Tenement *of Clay,*
And to an unknown *ſomewhere* wing away;
When Time *ſhall be* Eternity, *and thou* (*not* how.
Shalt be *thou know'ſt not* what, *and* live *thou know'ſt*

II.

Amazing State! *no wonder that we dread*
To think *of* Death, *or* view *the* Dead,
Thou'rt all wrapt up in Clouds, as if to thee
Our very knowledge *had* Antipathy.
Death could not a more ſad *retinue find,*
Sickneſs *and* pain before, *and* darkneſs *all* behind.

III.

Some courteous Ghoſt *tell this great Secrecy,*
What 'tis you are, and we muſt *be.*
You warn us of approaching Death, *and why*
May we not know from you what 'tis to dye?
But you having ſhot *the Gulph, delight to ſee*
Succeeding Souls plunge *in with like* uncertainty.

IV.

When Life's close knot by writ *from Destiny,*
Disease *shall cut, or* age unty;
When after some delays, *some dying strife,*
The Soul stands shivering *on the ridge of Life;*
With what a dreadful Curiosity
Does she launch *out into the Sea of vast* Eternity.

V.

So when the spacious Globe was delug'd o're,
And lower holds *could save no more,*
On th' utmost *Bough th' astonish'd Sinners stood,*
And view'd th' Advances *of th'* encroaching *Flood*
O're-topp'd *at length by th' Elements encrease,*
With horror *they resign'd to the* untry'd Abyss.

It is very desirable to know in what condition our Souls will be when they leave the Body, and what is the *Nature of that abode* into which we must go, but which we never saw into; and through what Region we must then take our flight, and after what manner this will be done. 'Tis certain my Soul will then preserve the faculties that are natural to it, *viz.* to *understand, to will, to remember*, as 'tis represented to us under the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*: But alas! we little know how the People of the *disembodied Societies* act, and will, and understand, and communicate their thoughts to one another, and therefore I long to know it. What conception can I have of a separated Soul (says a late Writer) but that *'Tis all Thought.* I firmly

I firmly think when a mans body is taken from him by Death, he is turn'd into all *Thought* and *Spirit*. How great will be its Thought when it is without any hinderance from these material Organs that now obstruct its Operations. In that *Eternity* (as one expresses it) the whole power of the Soul runs together one and the same way. In Eternity the Soul is united in its Motions, which way one faculty goes all go, and the Thoughts are all concentred as in one *whole Thought* * of Joy or Torment.

* Beverly's great Soul of Man. *pag.* 292.

These things have occasioned great *variety of Thoughts* in me, and my Soul when it looks towards the other World and thinks it self near, it can no more cease to be inquisitive about it, than it can cease to be a Soul.

I am not at all edified in the *Notion* of the *Blessed Trinity*, by the sight of a *Triangle*, neither can the whole *System* of the *Mathematicks* improve my Knowledge in this Point of *Divinity*. The *three* distinct *Faculties* of a *Humane Soul* are far from illustrating to me the *Three Persons* in *One Essence*, since there is a *Subordination* in the Former, whereas there is an *Equality* in the Latter. Such Similitudes and Comparisons seem not to me a *Stenography* or short Characters, but a false Spelling in *Divinity*. And tho' to *wiser Reasons*, and more *Active Beliefs*, they may serve as *Luminaries* in the *Abyss* of knowledge, yet my *Heavy Judgment* will never be able to

mount on such weak and brittle *Scales* and *Roundels* to the lofty Pinnacles of true *Theology*. All the force of *Rhetorical Wit* has not Edge enough to dissect so tough a Subject, wherein the little obscure *Glimmerings* we gain of that *Inaccessible Light*, come not to us in *direct Beams*, but by the faint *Reflexions* of a *Negative Knowledge*. And we can better apprehend what *it is not*, than what *it is*. In the Disquisition of his Works, I own, that those do highly magnifie Him whose *Judicious Enquiry* into his *Acts*, and deliberate *Research* into his *Creatures* return the Homage of a Devout and Learned *Paraphrase*. But in the Contemplation of that *Eternal Essence* to which no created Thought can be adæquate, I will humbly sit down and silently admire, that which neither the Heart can conceive, nor the *Tongue* or *Pen* of *Men* or *Angels* can declare as they ought, and as it is.

I do not affect *Rhodomontadoes* in *Religion*, nor to boast of the *Strength* of my *Faith*: I do not covet Temptations, nor court Dangers; Yet I can exercise my *Belief* in the difficultest Point when call'd to it; and walk stedfast and upright in Faith, without the *Crutch* of a visible *Miracle*. I can firmly believe in *Christ*, without going in *Pilgrimage* to his *Sepulchre*, neither need I the *Confirmation* that was vouchsaf'd to St. *Thomas* that *Proverb* of *Unbelief*. However I do not bless my self, nor esteem my *Faith* the better, because

cause I lived not in the *Days* of *Miracles*, nor ever saw *Christ* or any of his *Disciples*. Or because I was not one of his *Patients* on whom he wrought his *Wonders*. Both their *Faith* and mine were infus'd by the Ministration of the *Sences*. And as they believe't because they *saw*, so I believe, because I *hear* (undenyable Witnesses give *Testimony* of) the same *Matter* of *Fact*. Nor do I esteem their *Faith* the more *Extraordinary* who lived before his Coming, since they raised not a *Belief* of the future *Messias*, but on clear *Propheſies*, and most significant *Types*, being assured by the constant stream of *Tradition* from Father to Son, that what *God* had predetermin'd and foretold to *Adam* in Paradise, to *Abraham*, to *Jacob*, and the *Prophets*, should infallibly be accomplish'd in the fulness of Time. And I cannot see wherein their *Faith* had the Advantage of ours, that it should deserve to be esteem'd more Bold and Noble, since they had an *Isaiah* to preach the *Gospel* to Them, who for the Eloquence of his Style, his most accurate and particular Enarration of the *Birth* of *Christ*, has acquired the Title of the *fifth Evangelist*. 'Tis certain both their *Faith* and ours rests on the *Divine Revelation*, whether it consist in *Propheſie* of Things to come, or *History* of Things past. The ultimate *Object* of our *Belief* is one and the same, that is, the *Authority* of *God*. They had their *Sacraments* also to strengthen their Faith as

well as we. They were *Baptized* in the *Cloud* and in the *Sea*, they had *Manna* from *Heaven*, and *Water* out of a *Rock* in the *Earth*. They all eat the same Spiritual Meat, and drank the same Spiritual Drink as we, for they drank of the Spiritual *Rock* of Ages that followed Them, and that *Rock* was *Christ*.

I do not conclude from hence, That there is no difference between the *Sacraments* of the *Law*, and those of the *Gospel*. Doubtless there is an Excellency in the Latter to which the Former could not pretend. The *Elements* in Both are *Natural*, as *Water*, *Manna*, *Bread*, *Wine*, &c. so that in the Exteriour, neither of Them has the Advantage of the other. They were both also Conduits of the same inward *Grace* and *Spirit*. Only herein lyes the difference, that the *Jews* had it but by Measure, whereas the *Christians* receive it in Abundance. They touch'd but the Hem of *Christ*'s Garment, but we feed on his *Body* and *Blood*. They did but wade in the low Ebb of *Grace*, whereas we swim in the High-Tide and over-flowings of the *Holy Spirit*. Before the Everlasting Sluces were drawn up; while the *Heavens* were kept shut, the *Waters* which are above the *Heavens* did but distill gently on Mankind, The Divine Influence came Drop by Drop, here a little and there a little. But when Christ had once ascended up on High, and open'd the *Eternal Gates* above, then he shower'd down his Gifts upon Men

Men, and let looſe the Flood of Light and Grace, that ſo it might water the whole Earth, and *make glad the City of God*, which is the Chriſtian Church.

The *Sacraments of Chriſtianity* are the Principal Channels through which Eternal Life is conveyed to our Souls. By *Baptiſm* we are tranſplanted from the Old Stock of the *Firſt Adam*, and inoculated into Him who is the *True Vine*, in whom we grow up as Branches, receiving Nouriſhment and Encreaſe by the *Euchariſt*, which conveys to us the vital Principles of *Immortality* and Salvation. I cannot ſpeak of this tremendous Myſtery, without a *Circumlocution*, nor think of it without a *Rapture!* It is ſuch a *Complex of Riddles*, as it hath pos'd the ſtouteſt *Samſons* of the Church to ſolve: He alone was able to think and ſpeak aright of it in *few* words, who when he firſt inſtituted it, ſaid, *This is my Body, This is my Blood.* That there is a real *Change* made in the outward Elements after the words of Conſecration are pronounc'd, is an *Article* of my Faith; but the Manner how *this Change* is effected is no Query of my *Philoſophy*. I had rather humbly believe what I cannot comprehend in this Venerable *Sacrament*; than ſuffer any vain Diſquiſitions to ſtagger my Faith. I ſee *Bread and Wine* both retaining the ſame Taſte, Colour, and other natural Qualities of thoſe Creatures. Therefore I conclude there is no *Alteration* made in that which is the Object of my *Senſes*. The Change muſt be in the

Spiritual Part, which only falls under the Intellect. And yet I believe this *Change to be Real*, tho' I cannot ſenſibly perceive wherein, or how 'tis produced. Far be it from me to enter into the Secret of thoſe who make a mere *empty Figure* of the Bleſſed Sacrament; as if we were made Partakers only of mere *Natural Bread* and Wine in the Holy Communion. This is to follow the impious Steps of *Manicheus and Marcion*, who taught that our Saviour had only a Fantaſtick Figure of a Body, not a Real one; as if they thought the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary* brought forth nothing but a Shadow, becauſe ſhe was overſhadow'd by the Holy Ghoſt. *This is to outſtrip* Judas, *and begin where his Treaſon left off*: and as he ſold his Maſter's Life, ſo we ſhould rob the Church of his *Body and Blood*, which he bequeath'd to her in his laſt Supper. Doubtleſs his Body is in the Sacrament of the Euchariſt, but not *Bodily*, or after a corporeal manner, not inveſted with all the groſs Circumſtances of *Fleſh* and *Blood*, but after a Spiritual Manner, in a *Myſtery* too profound for *Humane Sence* or *Reaſon* to comprehend. I am extremely pleas'd with the Anſwer which Queen *Elizabeth* gave to the Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, when he demanded her Opinion of the *Real Preſence*, ſaid ſhe,

'Twas God the Word that ſpake it,
He took the Bread and brake it;
And what the Word did make it,
That I believe and take it.

It

It was an ill-manner'd, as well as an envious Retort of him that ſtood by and ſaid, Your Highneſſes Reply is like the *Delphick Oracle*, full of Ambiguous Subtilty: He had diſcover'd more Breeding and Charity, had he told her, That her Anſwer ſavour'd of his Wiſdom, who, when tempted by the *Phariſees* with a Queſtion concerning the Lawfulneſs of paying *Tribute to Cæſar*, took a piece of Money and asked *whoſe Image and Superſcription* was that ſtamped on it, they ſaid Cæſars, He replyed, *Give therefore to Cæſar, the Things that are Cæſar's*, and to God the Things that are Gods. It is certainly a neceſſary piece of Prudence ſometimes to obviate the *Trains* of an Enemy, with a witty Evaſion; which may be done without denying the Truth, or violating ones Conſcience. Thoſe who wou'd *trepan a man with Queries*, and make him a Tranſgreſſor for a word, deſerve to be paid in the ſame Coin, and by an *Ingenious adapting* of words and placing of Periods, be baffled in their Deſign, and ſent away like Fools as they came, without any better Satisfaction than they cou'd reap from *a Riddle*. In my Opinion it is but a Pious *Scepticiſm* to ſuſpend our Thoughts from determining the particular Mode of Chriſt's being *preſent* in the Sacrament, ſince it is impoſſible ever to demonſtrate ſo recondite a Secret, into which even the Angels themſelves, thoſe *perfect Intelligences* perhaps look with Admiration, without improving their Knowledge. It is ſufficient to my *humble Faith*, that my Redeemer

deemer is there, and that when I worthily receive this Bleſſed Sacrament, I ſhall receive the Author of it into my Tabernacle, and be united to the Heavenly Spouſe. This is the true *Hidden Manna* which nouriſhes both Angels and Men; This is the *Bread of Life*, which ſtrengtheneth Man's Heart; This is the Wine which rejoyceth God and Man. This is that *Heavenly Morſel* which God has given us as an Antidote againſt the Dregs of that Venom we all derive from *Adam*'s eating the forbidden Fruit.

And he is a kind Phyſician, who, when nothing elſe in the Divine *Pharmacopæa* could be found available for ſo great a Cure, *applies his own Body*, to heal the Diſtempers of our Souls, and his Blood to reſtore the *Spoyls of Humane Nature*. None but the Favourites of the King of Heaven are admitted to this *Immortal Banquet*. None but ſuch as have the Wedding Garment on, can have Acceſs to this Table of Delicacies, this Repaſt of *Royal Dainties*. Many indeed (and too many, 'tis to be feared) are licenſed to come into the *Kings Anti-Chambers*, and to ſit down in the Church and taſte the *outward Elements*, but it is the Priviledge of his Saints only to enter his Cabinet, and be *Regal'd* with the coſtly Entertainment of his Secret Table, and to partake in the New Wine of the Kingdom of Heaven.

A Serious Chriſtian once told me, that if ever he was like *Paul* taken up into the *Third Heaven*, it was when he firſt ſat down at the Lords Table.

The

The Sacrament of the *Lords Supper* is the neareſt and *viſibleſt* Communion that can be had with God and Chriſt upon Earth. Here are the greateſt revivings and the ſweeteſt refreſhings that a Pious Soul is capable of on this ſide Heaven it ſelf. Other Duties ſeem to be our work, this our *meat and wages*, other duties are but preparative to this, *Baptiſm*, *Praying*, *Preaching*, *Hearing*, *Meditating*, *Conferring*, are all ordained but to fit us for this High and Myſterious Ordinance. Here you have all the benefits of the Covenant of Grace folded up in one Rite. Here is the *whole contrivance of Salvation repreſented in a little Bread and Wine*, whereby God inviſibly ſeals up an aſſurance of his Everlaſting Love upon our Hearts.

It is grown even to a Proverb, ſaith *Acoſta*, among the poor *Indians* that have entertained the Faith that *Qui Euchariſtiam ſemel ſuſceperit*, &c. *He muſt never more be unholy that hath once received the Holy Communion.*

As to the *Poſture of Receiving*, I am not ſcrupulous, being willing to conform to the Cuſtom of thoſe with whom I *communicate*: I can receive on my *Knees* without Danger of Idolatry; or *Sitting*, without the Guilt of Contempt. This latter I eſteem of greater Antiquity, it being the Poſture wherein *Chriſt Communicated to his Diſciples* at the laſt Supper, unleſs it be ſaid they *lay along* according to the Mode of the Eaſtern People in thoſe Days. However I do not think the *Poſition* of the Body, but the Preparation of the Soul is required.

quired to render one a *Worthy Communicant* in these Holy Mysteries.

I censure not the Primitive Christians, nor those more Modern ones, who Communicate frequently, yet I should be timorous to approach these *Holy Mysteries* too often, lest I should incur the Judgment which St. *Paul* has pronounced on those who *eat and drink unworthily*. I have Charity for others who Celebrate this Sacrament Monthly, Weekly, or *Daily*, but I should have little for my self, should I receive this tremendous Mystery of Life, with less Preparation than were *requisite to fit me for Death*. It being in the Number of those Medicines which either *Kill or Cure*, according to the Constitution to which they are applyed.

If we examine the Books of Physicians, those *Registers of Humane Frailty* and Mortality, we shall find no less than *Six Thousand Diseases* on the Score, to which Man's *Body* is liable. And 'tis to be feared the *Distempers of the Soul* come not short of the Account. What is Pride but a *Tympany*? Lust but a *Feaver*? Drunkenness but a *Dropsie*? Envy and Malice but the *Consumption* of the Soul? To obviate these and innumerable more Spiritual Maladies, God has (as a Token of his Infinite Bounty) given His Ministers Commission to dispense to the Sons of Men the *Sacrament of his Body and Blood*, as a Divine Catholicon, or Cure for [all] the Diseases which are incident to our Souls, but with this Condition,

Condition, That he who partakes of these *Holy Mysteries* unworthily, instead of being healed, does but increase his Malady, work it up to a dangerous *Crisis*, if not to a desperate *Paroxism*, which affords no Hopes, but a fearful Expectation of *Judgment to come*. *Cyprian* tells us two remarkable Stories, that one coming to the Sacrament, after the Minister had given him the *Bread*, and he going to eat it, it stuck in his Throat *Gladium sibi sumens non cibum*, saith he, he received his Bane instead of Bread, the other came and took the Bread into his Hand, and when he went to eat it, there was nothing but *Ashes in his Hand*. This Apprehension, I ingenuously declare, has had such *Influence* on me, as to restrain me long from approaching the *Holy Table*. I tremble at the Thought of *Eating and Drinking my own Damnation*, and of trampling under-foot the Blood of the *Eternal Testament*.

I love not to humour my Spleen or gratifie my *Hypocondria*, by inveighing against the Luxury of the *present Age*, as if it were worse than those of old, and that our *Fore-fathers* did not Eat and Drink to Excess as well as we: The present Intemperance of Mankind is but the *Transmigration of the Former*: And our Posterity shall but act o're the Patterns we set them. *Drunkenness is as old as* Noah's *Flood, and Epicurism begun with* Adam. The one had no sooner escaped the Universal Inundation of *Water*, but he had like to have been drown'd in a *Deluge of Wine*; And the Other

not content with the large Indulgence and Commission God had given Him to eat of the *Fruits of Paradise*, must needs *leap the Fence* which guarded the *Forbidden Tree*, and when he might have Banquetted without Satiety or End on the *Varieties* which would have given him *Life and Immortality*, he plays the Glutton, and Surfeits Himself with the Plant of Death and Damnation. His *Children* soon learn'd to tread in their Father's Steps, and *Gluttony was equally propagated with Mankind*. And tho' that Repairer of *Adam*'s almost Shipwrackt Progeny could be abstemious, when he might have furnisht his Table with all the *Beasts of the Earth and Fowls of the Air at one Meal*, yet he could not refrain from the tempting *Fruit of the Vine*. His Ebriety was also catching, and the Incestuous Off-spring of *Lot* ow'd their Original to the *Blood of the Grape*. Before the Flood Men were buried in Banquetting and Riot, so they have been ever since, and so they will be, to the End of the World. Men are great Followers of Antiquity in the Practice of these Vices.

For my Part I envy not the *Board of* Vitellius that at one Meal was covered with *two Thousand Fish*, and double that Number of *Fowls*. Neither do I covet the more Expensive Feasts of *Heliogabulus*. The refin'd Luxury of *Cleopatra* seems to me less Sordid, tho' more Prodigal, who at one Draught *swallow'd down a King's Ransom*. It was not her Palate she gratify'd in that Rich Potion, but she humour'd

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the Gust of her Ambition; which is a *Sublimer sort of Vice*, and may not unfitly be call'd the *Gluttony of the Soul*, while it Revels on the Breath of Fame, and Epicurizes with a *Chamelion-like* Appetite on the Air of Honour.

Intemperance is the *Blind side of Mortals*; it is our soft Place, where we suffer our selves to be stroak'd and tickl'd to Death by the *flattering* Serpent. This made *Isaac* mis-place his Blessing for a *Piece of Venison*, and his Son to sell his Birth-right for a *Mess of Pottage*. The *Italian* Proverb hits the Glutton Home when it says, He digs his Grave with his Teeth, and cuts his Throat with the Knife that carves his Meat.

Rioting and Drunkenness were formerly esteemed the National Sin of *Germany* only, but I believe other Nations may put in for a share in the Charter. *It is the Epidemick Vice of the whole World.* Men fall passionately in Love with it as if they were of *Mucaus* the Poet's Opinion, who held, That *perpetual Drunkenness* was the only Reward of Merit and Vertue. The very *Mahometans* themselves, who are expressly forbidden by their Law to *taste* of Wine, being told by *Mahomet* that there is lodg'd a *Devil in every Grape*, are sworn Votaries to *Bacchus*, and the greatest Drunkards on Earth.

For my own Part, I could be content with the Diet of *Johannes de Temporibus*, who when he had lived three Hundred years, being asked by the King of *France*, *What method he took*

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to preſerve his Life to ſo great an Age; Re plied, *Intus Melle, extra Oleo.* I ſay, I coul be content with his Diet, not ſo much fo the ſake of *Spinning out my Life* to Centuri of years, (which yet I believe were not a together impracticable in one of my Conſti tution) as that by a conſtant and habitu Deſuetude of *merely Animal* Enjoyments, might the more cloſely and vigorouſly atten the Operations of my Soul, and be alway *awake to the Superiour Faculties of my Mind* an Intellect, *Anima Sicca, eſt Anima Sapiens*, wa a true Maxim of the Philoſopher. And the Sons of *Minerva* experience it.

I abhor the Superſtitious Cant, and Diſ criminating Shibboleth of *Enthuſiaſts*, who muſt needs take upon them to alter the Form of ſound Words; as if the Dialect of the Primitive Church were grown obſolete, or that the Apoſtles underſtood not the *Orthography of Chriſtian Faith.* I like not thoſe Spiri tual *Bouteſeux*, who take a great Deal of Pains to breed a Quarrel between *Religion and Na ture*, and ſet thoſe two Twins together by the Ears; as if we could not be good Chriſtians, unleſs we deny our *Senſe and Reaſon.* Cer tainly it is not the Buſineſs of Religion to Sup plant and Extirpate Nature, but to prune and rectifie it. *Religion* is that which poliſhes and ſmooths the Roughneſs of laps'd Humanity, pares away the Vicious Knobs which grow up with us from our *tainted Embryo*, and by various Inſtruments of Grace forms and ſquares

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us into fit Materials for God's Holy Temple. *The Work of Regeneration seems in some manner to copy that of Creation.* The Holy Ghost at his first Visit, finds us in our corrupt state, but a meer *Chaos*, a confused *Heap of Passions* and Sensual Appetites; our Reason, that *Light of our Souls* lyes Dormant, smother'd as it were by our Animal Faculties; Darkness covers the face of this *Microcosm*, till he give the Word, *Fiat Lux*, and by a forcible Energy strike some Divine Sparks out of our *Flinty* Hearts: Thus separating the *Cœlestial* Parts from the *Terrestrial*, and Sublimating us into the Similitude of his own glorious Essence, Enduing us with *Faith*, without destroying our *Reason*, and inspiring us with Charity, without exterminating our Passions. Thus I can believe the most transcendent *Mysteries* of our Religion, and yet not be guilty of an implicite Credulity and blind Devotion: And I can practise *Christian Moderation*, tho' I cou'd never learn the Stoical Apathy.

I highly value the Sacred Scripture as the *Oracle of Divinity, and Rule of Faith*: Yet I esteem them not a System of Philosophy, or Pandect of *natural Science*. They are able to make us Wise unto Salvation, and perfect in the Knowledge of God, through Faith in Christ Jesus, but they instruct us not in *Mundane Curiosities*, nor acquaint us with the Theory of all his Works. That frightful Caution of the Apostle [*Beware of vain Philosophy*] is no Bug-bear to my Studies, nor can it startle

my harmleſs Enquiries into the *Secrets* of the Elements. I will not be afraid of prying in to the Circumſtances of the *Earth*, ſince Jo has told us, it is *hang'd upon Nothing*; nor c caſting my Eyes up to the Heavens, and ex mining the Motions, Influences and Oper tions, of *the Sun, Moon and Stars*, ſince t ſame Holy Patriarch was poſed with this ſtrological Queſtion by God himſelf, Ca Thou *reſtrain the ſweet Influence of the Pleiad or looſe the Bands of Orion?* There are ma Natural Obſervations in the Bible which m ſerve as Hints or Spurs to more *accurate D quiſitions:* But in no Place that I know d does it ſet a *Non Ultra* to thoſe Sober Enq rers, who by making a Modeſt and Judicio Search into the *Works of the Creation*, are c pable of returning a more exact and conſu mate Praiſe to the Eternal *Architect* Indee moſt (if not all) the *Manual Trades* in t World, are but the ſeveral *Species* of Prac cal Philoſophy: While the Mechanick p in Execution the *Theory* of the Student, a what the One dictates from the *School of N ture*, the other Experiments in the *Shop Art*. Neither would Men know how to ke themſelves in Action or maintain Commer were it not for the Sake of *Philoſophy*. T this are owing all the Advances and *Progre ons* that Ingenious Men have made in th Callings and Occupations. And every *Sm Carpenter, Maſon, &c.* that makes an I provement in his Craft or Myſtery deſer

the Title of *Virtuoso*, and to be number'd among the Philosophers

Among all the Sciences, there is none to which (had I leisure) I could be more devoted than to *Astronomy*, and for this Reason I cou'd raise a Pyramid to the Inventors of the *Telescope*, That Happy Midwife to new Discoveries in the Heavens; and think my Self no less oblig'd to Him that first found out the Motion of the Earth. Both have Enfranchis'd me from the Slavery of Prepossession, and taught me to *unthink* the Sentiments of my greener Years. Methinks I owe no Allegiance to *Ptolomy*, and am perfectly wean'd from the Magisterial Dictates of the *Stagyrite*. I cannot so readily believe that the Sun moves above two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Miles every Minute of Time, as that the Earth moves Eighteen Miles in that space. And that the *Planet Saturn* moves ten, and the *fixed Stars* a Hundred Times faster and farther than the Sun in the same space, which must be the Consequence of the *Earth's standing still*, and the Suns Motion. It seems no *good Divinity* to me, to expect that from Gods Infinite Power, which is repugnant to his equal Wisdom and the *Laws of Motion* which he has Establish'd in the Universe. This were to make one of his Attributes *Clash* with another, and to calumniate his Holiness, which consists in the *Harmony* of them all. I adore his *Omnipotency*, and tremble at the

Thought of calling in Question the Power that made *All things of Nothing.* Yet I think it my Duty to be wise as well as Devout, and to speak *rightly* as well as *reverently* of his Divine Perfections. As his word is the *Rule of my Faith*, so his Providence is the *Pole-Star* of my Reason. And in the Scrutiny of his Works I do not so much enquire what he is able to do as what he uses to do. Being assured that as nothing is to him Impossible, so he has stinted the Being, Actions, Passions, Qualities and Circumstances of all Things, ordering them in exact Number, Weight and Measure. So that *à posse Dei ad esse Rei non valet Consequentia.* He has fix'd the Laws of *Loco-motion* in Corporeal Substances, and ty'd up the *Primum Mobile* it self to a certain Proportion of Time and Distance, which it can no more exceed, than the smallest *Wheel* of a Watch.

Such prodigious Whirligigs, as the Heavenly Bodies must needs be, in the *Ptolomaick Hypothesis*, makes me giddy to think on't, and I believe they were troubl'd with a Vertigo that first *reel'd* upon the Notion: Or they labour'd under the Deception of those at Sea who sailing within Sight of the Shore, and not being able to perceive the Motion of the Vessel that carries them, are apt to phancy the Neighbouring *Cliffs*, *Towns and Trees* were under Sail, and steering a contrary Course, since they so appear to do. For not less silently do I believe the *Earth moves constantly round on her Axis*, thus making the Natural

Day

Day and Night, without putting the whole Frame of the Universe into an unconceivable Hurry.

The *Planet Jupiter* is discover'd by the Telescope to make the same Circulation in 10 Hours, *Mars* in 23, and the *Sun* himself in 28 Days. These are no Chimæra's or Dreams of Poets, no Metaphysical Speculations of *Nut-shell* Brains, but Real Truths, demonstrable by Art and Ocular Experience. And methinks it is a more *Uniform Idea*, if we suppose the *Earth to be a Planet* like the Rest, and to take its Turn in the Septenary Dance round the Sun, who is plac'd in the Centre of this Vortex, and is the *true Apollo*, to whose Musick the whole *Planetary System* keeps Time. I fear not the Lash of *Maurolycus*, nor the Scourge of his bigotted Brethren. If *Copernicus* was by them thought *Scuticâ & Flagello dignus*, for innovating on the Doctrines of *Ptolomy*; What was *Ptolomy* himself worthy of, who entrench'd on a greater Antiquity, and undermin'd the Philosophy of *Aristarchus Samius*, who taught the *Motion of the Earth* above four hundred years before *Ptolomy* was an Infant? For my Part I think it no *Treason* against the Common-wealth of Learning to say, I prefer *Galileo*'s *Tube* to *Ptolomy*'s *Spectacles*, and the Discoveries of our English *Royal Society*, to the blind Conjectures of the Peripateticks, and the wild Speculations of *Athens*.

When I was first inform'd that there were discover'd *four new Stars moving about Jupiter*,

and three about Saturn, I was as well pleased, as they who received the earliest News of *Columbus's landing in America*. I am so far from being of *Alexander's* Humour, that instead of *weeping*, I should heartily rejoyce could I be credibly satisfied, That there are *ten Thousand more Worlds*, than are already discover'd.

I am naturally Melancholy, and the weight of this *leaden* Complexion does so depress my Spirits, That all the Race of Mankind on Earth seems too small to afford *Variety* enough for a Relief. This makes me the more willing to believe what my Reason suggests to be true, That the Planets are Inhabited. It is a lively as well as a Rational Notion; and since they are Dark, Opake Bodies, like the Earth we tread on, having no other Light but what they borrow from the *Sun*, and seem in all other Circumstances to be *adapted for Habitations*, I see no Solæcism in Philosophy, nor Heresie against the *Faith* to believe they are *really Inhabited* as is this Globe. That they have *Succession* of Day and Night, and their *Satellites* or Moons to give them Light by Night, even as we, is demonstrable to the Eye by the help of the *Telescope*. But there would, in my Opinion, be little need of all this, were there no *rational Inhabitants in those Cœlestial Globes*. 'tis a fastidious Pride in Man to phancy all the *Glittering* Furniture above was only made for Ornament, or for *Shepherds* to gaze on in the Night, or for some other Inferior uses of the Sons of *Adam*. And 'tis a narrow Conce

to imagine, that tho' this Globe be plentifully Inhabited by all ſorts of Animals, *not a Turf of Land, nor a Puddle of Water being without its Tenants*, yet all thoſe ample and glorious Bodies above ſhould lye empty and vacant, tho' ſome of them be far bigger than our Earth, and for ought we know, may be ten times *more commodious* for Habitation. Thoſe Paſſages in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles to the *Philippians* 2. 11. *Epheſ.* 1. 9, 10. *Coloſ.* 1. 16. ſeem to be calculated for the *Inhabitants of thoſe Heavenly Bodies.* And his Emphatical words in *Epheſ.* 3. 9. ſeem to be but a Tranſcript of the Revelations he receiv'd, and of the Things he ſaw when he was *Rapt into the Third Heaven, viz.* That there are ſome in thoſe Heavenly Places, even Principalities and Powers, to whom the manifold Wiſdom of God in Chriſt was made known, and that they were not only Created by Him, but for Him, and that they and we are *all of one Family or Deſcent.* Theſe may be ſome of the ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα which that Holy Apoſtle ſpeaks of in 2 *Cor.* 12. 4. Words and Myſteries which could not be utter'd. And for ought I know, thoſe Beings which he calls *Principalities*, Powers, Mights, Thrones and Dominions may be no other than the ſeveral *glorious Colonies* of the Cœleſtial Family dwelling in the Stars, who all believe in the ſame Eternal Jeſus, even as we do, and through his Mediation make their Approaches to God the Father. This may be *the farther Fellowſhip of*

the Mystery of God, hid from the Beginning. This the untraceable Riches of Christ, which put St. *Paul* to an ὦ βάθος! ὦ ὑπερβάλλον μέγεθος τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ. O the Depth of his Wisdom! O the Superlative Greatness of his Power! But whether the *Planets be Inhabited* or no, this I am assured of, and can produce an Hundred Authentick Witnesses, that they are *Dark* Bodies, like the Earth we tread on, and that they have no Light but what they receive from the Sun, which also they do but partially enjoy like us, by *Successive* Hemispheres, having their Day and Night measur'd out to them proportionate to the Time they take up in moving *round their Centers.*

When I have tyred my self with following these *visible Motions of Nature*, I retire *Home* again, thinking to take Sanctuary in my self, and find a Rest in the Contemplation of my own Soul: But there I do but commence a new Fatigue, and am hurried about in a *perpetual* Circle by an invisible Energy within me, I think, speak, and act with *infinite Variety*, yet know not how I perform these different Operations. I know my self to be an *Incorporeal* Substance, and can easily feel out my own Independency on the Body. I look on this *House of Clay* I carry about with me, to be only my Prison. But how I am confin'd to this Prison, I that am but a poor Scintillation or Spark of the Eternal Sun, is a *Riddle* which I cannot solve. I can better imagine how a Beam of our Visible Sun may be united to a

Marble

Marble Statue, than that a *pure Thought* ſhould be faſtned to a Clod of Earth, from which it cannot free it ſelf but by Death, though it can pervade all the *Univerſe* beſide. What Cement is it that thus cloſely tyes together two ſuch incompatible Eſſences, as *Heaven and Earth*, Light and Darkneſs, Spirit and Body? This is a Knot muſt be left for *Elias* to untye, and is indeed one chief Argument of the *Shipwrack* of Humane Reaſon, ſince not only all other Things are obſcure to us, but we are ſo to our ſelves, the neareſt Objects, even our own *Domeſtick* Operations are as incomprehenſible to us, as thoſe that are fartheſt off. The Things that touch us, nay the very Faculties by which we *touch, ſee, underſtand, &c.* are as diſtant from us as the *Ninth* Sphere, & we are as much ſtrangers to our ſelves, as to the Inhabitants of *Terra Incognita*. There wou'd be nothing more welcom to me than a Hiſtory of my Original, for I do not compute my Age or Family, by the ſhort Chronology of the *Pariſh-Regiſter*; nor do I think my ſelf much the older by my Mother's Additional Record of *Nine Months*, I liv'd in her Womb. I eſteem her Reckoning from my *Conception*, but the Tragick Memories of my Death, and thoſe which by moſt are accounted the *Chambers of Life*, and Shops of Generation, are no better in my Judgment than the Receptacles of the Dead, Seminaries of Corruption, the Graves of Souls *defunct to the Higher World*. For I believe I was then Born when the Morning Stars *Sang together*, and

and when all the Sons of God ſhouted for Joy, I time my Infancy with that of the Univerſe, and eſteem no Man older or younger than my ſelf, no not the *Angels* themſelves, believing that all *Spiritual* Subſtances were Created together, in the Beginning. I will not with ſome accuſe *Moſes* of ſcantineſs in his *Hiſtory of the Creation*, becauſe according to the Letter he ſeems to take but little notice of *Immaterial* Beings. The Hebrew *Cabbala*, with the Commentaries of their Learned Rabbins, and ſome of the *Primitive* Fathers of the Chriſtian Church do ſufficiently evince, That there are greater Myſteries contained in the Three firſt Chapters of *Geneſis*, than the bare Letter, or Vulgar Tranſlations ſeem to exhibit. There is a *Sacrament* in that Holy Language, which whoſoever partakes of, can be no ſtranger to the Natural and Divine Truths couch'd under it. To ſuch an One the Hiſtory of the *Terreſtrial Adam*'s Happy State in Paradiſe, and his Baniſhment from thence, will be an Hieroglyphick of the Original Beatitude of the Immaterial World, and the Degeneracy of humane Souls, their Deſcent from the Ætherial Manſions, and *Confinement to Houſes of Clay*, as well as of the Fall of Angels. I ſeem to my ſelf, not without Reaſon to embrace the Doctrine of the Præexiſtence of Souls, ſince it was among the *Credenda* of many Antient Sages, a peculiar Tradition of the Jews, and the general Opinion of all the Eaſt. That Queſtion which was put to our Saviour concerning the *Man*

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that was born Blind, whether it was for his own ſins, or thoſe of his Parents, ſeems clearly to imply, That he was in a Condition or Capacity of *ſinning before his Birth*, which how it could be without ſuppoſing the Præexiſtence of his Soul, is paſt my Divinity or Philoſophy to unriddle. The various Conjectures alſo which the Jews made of Chriſt, according to the Report of his Diſciples, when ſome *ſaid he was* Elias, *others that he was one of the Prophets, a third ſort, that he was* John *the Baptiſt riſen from the Dead*, are evident Arguments, That the Doctrine of Præexiſtence, and a *Metempſychoſis* was eſtabliſh'd as part of the Creed of that Nation. Of which alſo that paſſage in the Wiſdom of *Solomon* is no obſcure hint, where the Author ſays, *Or rather being a good Spirit, I came into a Body pure and undefiled.* Neither am I ſtartled becauſe I find not Chriſt, or any of his Apoſtles aſſerting, or ſo much as mentioning any ſuch Doctrine. St. *John's Hyperbole* in the laſt verſe of his Goſpel, ſatisfies me, that I muſt not expect to find all that our Saviour did and ſaid, regiſter'd by the Evangeliſts: And St. *Paul's* frequent Exhortation to hold faſt the Traditions that he had imparted to them, whether by *Word* or *Epiſtle*, convince me, That it is not unreaſonable to conclude, That he deliver'd many Doctrines in his Sermons, which he had no occaſion to mention in his *Letters to the Churches*: Among which this might be one. However, it is a ſufficient Warrant to my

Belief.

Belief, That I no where in all the Scriptures can find this Doctrine reprehended. Which, had it been an Errour, cou'd not have escaped the censure of Christ and his Apostles, it being the Universal Tenet of all sorts of Jews, except the Sadduces. When I consider also that *Origen* and *Ammonius* taught it in the Schools of *Alexandria* (*Plotinus* himself learning it from the latter) and that all the Primitive Fathers who were Platonists, asserted it not only as a Philosophical, but also as a Divine Truth; I look upon it as an Effect of *Gothick Barbarity* and Ignorance, which afterwards overspread all Christendom, That neither this, nor hardly any other *Point of Platonism* were countenanced in the Christian Schools, but only the Dictates of *Aristotle* and his *Ghost Averroes*. In fine, that elegant Flourish of St. *Augustine*, *Infundendo creatur, creando infunditur*, is no Rule of my Faith in this Point, since it fastens so many irreverend Consequences on God Almighty; neither can I believe the Soul to be *ex Traduce*, because it carries in its *Front* so many *Inconsistencies* in Philosophy, besides the Indignity that is done to the Soul thereby, which amounts to a true *Scandalum Magnatum*, since 'tis levell'd at the whole Order of *immaterial Beings*. I must therefore believe, That I had a Being long before I came into this Body, and yet not resolve the Manner of my Existence into a meer *Potentiality*, or an unactive slumber in the *Bosom of my Causes*, as if I were then but a *Semi-*

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al Idea in the Blood of my Fathers, or a *Metaphyſical Dream* of my preſent ſelf. I believe I was in a State of greater Activity before I was *conceiv'd* by my Mother than ſince ſhe bore me; and for ought I know, have *ſung'd all the Boundleſs Tracts of the Univerſe, been Naturaliz'd in the ſeveral Regions of the Sky and Air, till being tyred with ſo vaſt a Ramble, and willing to try all States of Life*, I was by the Force of a ſtrong Inclination, and the irreſiſtible Charm of rightly adapted Matter, *allured* into this Terreſtrial Body, here to do Penance for the Faults of my Superiour Life, and in this Horizon between the upper and the lower World to make my Choice of Good or Evil, Light or Darkneſs, Life or Death. This unlocks all the *Ænigma's of Providence*; and reconciles the harſher Difficulties with which the Immediate Creation or Traduction of Souls is involved. It is the nobleſt Inſtrument of Vertue, the ſharpeſt *Spur* to a Divine Life, whilſt it doubles the Hopes we have of being Immortal *à Parte poſt*, by aſſuring us we were ſo *à Parte ante*. And that it is not from any Arbitrary Decree of God, inconſiſtent with the Reſt of his Divine Perfections, that we ſhall live for ever, but from our own Nature and Eſſence, being Created to ſubſiſt an *interminable* Duration of Ages.

I believe thoſe Books of the Holy *Scripture* which are loſt, could they poſſibly be recovered again, would ſerve as a Lamp to enlighten

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us in many *Obscurities* of Religion, History, and Nature: And if the Writings of *Jasher*, *Iddo* the Prophet, *&c.* could inform us nothing of the Præexistence of Souls, 'tis very probable the more early Oracles of *Enoch* would, since he was but the Seventh Soul *that was drench'd in Terrestrial Matter*, and led so pure and incorrupt a Life, as wou'd tempt one to believe, That he was *awaken'd* to the Memory of his former State, which for ought we know might have no small influence on his succeeding Change.

I have often wonder'd where St. *Jude* had so particular an Account of *Michael* the Arch-Angels dispute with the *Devil* about the *Body of Moses*, that he was able to relate the very words that pass'd between them. Surely the Jews had some Books, or at least Traditions, which were believed to be Orthodox, tho' they were not so much as mention'd in the Sacred Canon; for we cannot without great Impiety imagine that the *Holy Saint* wou'd impose upon our Belief any thing that was Forreign or Apocryphal. I am apt to conclude from hence, That there were many *Traditional Doctrines* entertained among the Hebrews, which are by us esteemed no better than Fables.

However, tho' I am thus convinced of the Truth of our Præexistence, and that this present Life is but a *Shadow or Dream* in comparison of what we enjoy'd before our Immersion in the Flesh; yet I wou'd not have this Dream interrupted by any untimely or harsher stroke of Destiny.

Deſtiny. *I ſhou'd think it no inconvenience to live long!* but rather a Bleſſing. That ſo a multitude of years might *ſcum* off the Froth and Sullage of our Appetites and Paſſions, that ſo being *gradually* wean'd from thoſe low Affections which brought us down to the Earth, we may without any Diſquiet or Turbulency remount to our *Ætherial Homes*. For I am apt to think that thoſe Souls who go out of their Bodies, with any *remaining Reliſh* upon them of the Body, like Fruit that is either pluck'd off, or ſhaken down by violent Winds, ſtill retain in their ſeparation, a raw and eager ſmack of the Fleſh, with a languiſhing Byaſs toward it. Whereas he that has tarried his full Period, in the Body, parts from it with Eaſe and Willingneſs, as *Ripe Fruit* drops from the Tree. And therefore I do not wonder that the moſt general Scene of *Apparitions, Ghoſts*, &c. is the Church-yard, or at leaſt that Place where the Body of the *Spectrum* was buried. And the removed Earth which covered the *Cobler of* Sileſia's *Body* is a ſhrewd intimation, That there are ſome *Departed* Souls, which if they ſeek not a Reunion with their Bodies, yet endeavour to hold a *kind of Correſpondence* with them even in the Grave. And tho' the Impoſſibility of being married again to theſe their dear *Conſorts*, after that final Divorce, were enough, one wou'd think, to cure their Impotent Deſires, yet they burn with a new Luſt, and commit a *Spiritual* Adultery in the unlawful Bed of the Grave. Theſe I look on as the

Effects

Effects of a *too early* and violent Separatio and therefore esteem *Methuselah* and the Re of the Fathers before the Flood, happy; wh prolong'd their years to the *utmost* standa of Humane Life, and seem'd not so much die, (for that imports Violence) as volun rily to forsake their *old Rotten* Habitatio shake Hands with their Bodies, and so retu to the Ætherial Palaces, from whence they h so long *dragled*.

Yet notwithstanding the great Esteem have of *long Life*, as a Means rather to Im prove than Impair us; I cannot promise m self to out-live a *Jubilee*, tho' I have already seen one Revolution of *Saturn*. Neither do I affect to make *Popes*, *Emperours*, *Kings*, and *Grand Seigniours*, the Land-marks in the Chronology of my self; That were to insult over the *Royal* Ashes of Princes, besides the Ambition in *Ranking* my self in their Number. Methinks I grow old even at those Years when the World counts me Young, and possess the Heritage of *David*'s last *Ten Years* of Fourscore, in the *Prime* of my Age.

Indeed the whole Earth, and all this *Planetary World* seems to droop and decay. Every *Species* of Beings grow weak and languid, and seem to draw near their Dissolution. Yet 'tis needless to engage God in the Act, since tho' *Creation* was above the Force of Nature, yet *Mutation* is not, and no *Annihilation* can proceed from that Paternal Essence of Essences. It seems ease to me to believe, That the

World

World will perish upon the *Ruins of its own Principles.* And tho' the precise Period of its Destruction be not known to the Angels themselves, yet there are not wanting some *Philosophical Rules*, whereby one might venture to Calculate its Duration, and by observing the various Attempts, Eruptions and Devastations made by Fire already, one may conjecture about what Time that most *active* Element shall be let loose, to destroy this Face of the World, and transform this *Superannuated* Heaven and Earth into *New Ones*, as the Holy Prophet has foretold. For as to Annihilation, I look on it as a Chimera, or Non Entity, which cannot be said to flow from Him who is *All-being*, and the Fountain of Existence. It were easier to conceive that Cold should be the immediate Effect of Fire, and Darkness the Natural Result of the actual Presence of Light, than to think that *Annihilation or not Being* can proceed from Him who is the Original Source of Being, from whose Divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness all Things flow by a *Necessary Emanation*, and continue in their several Perfections by as unalterable a Law as that which gave them; so that there can be no Vanity supposed in their Eternal Subsistence, no Leaps or Starts from Something to Nothing. It is far more agreeable to the Principles of Philosophy to conceive, That only the Gross and Corruptible Part of the Universe shall be subject to the *Action of Fire*,

ſuch as the Earth we tread on with the othe
Planetary Bodies; but that the pureſt Æth
ſhall remain for ever untouch'd, unchang'
the Sanctuary of the Bleſs'd, the Habitatio
of the Spirits of *Juſt men made perfect.* I a
alſo confirmed in this Belief by ſomethi
more Sacred and Authentick than *natural* P
loſophy. For when the Royal Pſalmiſt in t
Divine Rhapſody calls upon the *Heavens*
Heavens, and the Waters which are above
Heavens to praiſe God, he gives this for
Reaſon, (*viz.*) Becauſe he ſpake and th
were made, he commanded and they we
created. He eſtabliſh'd them to Eternit
and *for Everlaſting Ages:* He fix'd a Decre
which he will not diſannul. Then he calls up
the Earth and all Creatures therein to joyn
the ſame *Act of Praiſe*, but not for the ſam
Reaſon; not becauſe the *Earth ſhall end*
for ever, but becauſe the Name of God alo
is exalted, and his Honour above Heaven a
Earth. Which Diſtinction ſeems to me
evident Argument of the *unalterable Stabil*
of the Cœleſtial and Ætherial World, what
ever Mutations and Changes the Terreſt
may be ſubject to.

That thoſe immenſe Tracts of quiet and i
paſſible *Æther* ſhall be the *Seat of the Bleſ*
is very conſiſtent with Philoſophy, and
ways repugnant to Divinity. However,
the Place be where it pleaſes God, we
aſſured that the Entertainment and Joys
far ſurpaſs all humane Comprehenſion.

ho' we cannot have *adequate* Conceptions of Supream Felicity, there are ſome Land-marks by which we may take imperfect Meaſures of that *Region of Promiſe*. The Dim Light of Natural Reaſon may afford us a Glimpſe, or faint Proſpect of thoſe Superlative Joys, and the *Opticks of Faith* will improve the View. We ſhall have the ſame Nature and Faculties there as here, but free from the leaſt Alloy of Frailty and Imperfection. Our Souls ſhall diſplay the radiant Brightneſs of their Immortal Eſſence with ſtronger *Vibrations* than the Sun, having no *internal Scum* of Concupiſcence boyling out from the Center of a depraved Will or erroneous Underſtanding, to blemiſh and ſtain thoſe unſpotted Orbs of Light; nor a terrene groſs Body to Eclipſe and ſhut up their Splendors. But being ever Bright and Serene, they ſhall *ſhine through* their Glorified and Spiritual Bodies, as the Sun does through the *pervious* Air, or at leaſt as he does on a *Bright* Cloud, which drinks in his Beams to reflect them abroad with a more *ſenſible* Glory. We ſhall then ſee, not by receiving the Viſible Species into the *narrow Glaſs* of an Organized Eye, we ſhall then hear without the diſtinct and curious *Contexture* of the Ear. The Body ſhall then be *all Eye*, all *Ear*. All *Senſe* in the whole, and every Senſe in every Part. In a word, it ſhall be all over a common *Senſorium*, and being made of the pureſt Æther, without the Mixture of any lower or groſſer Element, the Soul ſhall by one *undivided* Act,

at once perceive all that Variety of Object which now cannot without ſeveral diſtinct Organs, and ſucceſſive Actions or Paſſions reach our Senſe. From this *Superlative* Tenuity and Claritude of our Bodies, will ariſe that *ineffable* Delicacy in the Senſation of the Soul, which will tranſport it with Delight infinitely tranſcending the *Heighth* of Mortal Voluptuouſneſs, nay and even thoſe more exalted Pleaſures which the Vertuous ſometimes enjoy here on Earth as *Foretaſts* of their future Beatitude in Heaven. What here excites but an Ordinary Emotion of Joy in the Soul, will there produce all *Raptures and Ecſtaſies*. We ſhall be always in *Paroxiſms of Love*, ſuch are the tranſcendent *Beauties* of that admirable Place! and ſuch the divinely amorous Bent of the Soul. We ſhall be *always languiſhing*, yet ever enjoying what we languiſh for: Neither ſuffering the leaſt Pain through the Want of Fruition, nor through any Satiety that ſhall attend it: But through the *Vigour of an Immortal Activity*, we ſhall have ever freſhly kindled Deſires and new Enjoyments, being diſſolv'd in a *Circle of Beatitude* without Meaſure or End.

Here on Earth Men generally ſtrive to *Monopolize* Pleaſure to themſelves, there being few of ſo generous a Temper as to be ſenſibly touch'd with Delight, that another ſhou'd partake with them in that which they eſteem Felicity: This is the *peculiar* Advantage of the Bleſs'd in Heaven, that even in the Heighth of the

the Affairs of Immortal Love and Empire, where they poſſeſs *Eternal* Crowns and unfading Beauties, there is no ſuch Thing to be found as a Rival or Competitor, but every one's *Joy* is enhanc'd by the Enjoyments of another. *Every one loves all, and all love every one.* Neither wou'd their Felicity be Perfect, ſhou'd any Member of that Happy Society be ſuppos'd not to have his full proportion and ſhare of Beatitude. So communicative is the Love and Joy of thoſe Holy Souls, that they muſt ceaſe to love and enjoy themſelves, ſhou'd they deſiſt from loving and rejoicing in the Happineſs of their *Fellow-Citizens.* And if we may take our Meaſures of their Joys from our Common Experiences here on Earth, it will be no ſmall Augmentation of their Complacency, to find thoſe *very Friendſhips which they had contracted here below*, tranſlated to the Manſions above, when they ſhall both ſee and know thoſe whom they once loved on Earth, now to be made Denizens with them in Heaven, *with what Ardours will they careſs one another!* With what Tranſports of Divine Affection will they mutually embrace, and vent thoſe Innocent Flames, which had ſo long lain *smothering* in the Grave! How paſſionately Rhetorical and Elegant will their Expreſſions be, when their Sentiments which Death had *frozen* up, when he congeal'd their Blood, ſhall now be *Thaw'd again in the warm Airs of Paradiſe!* Like Men that have eſcap'd a common Shipwrack, and ſwim ſafe to the Shore,

they will congratulate each other's Happine with Joy and Wonder. *Their first Addreſſ will be a Dialect of Interjections and ſhort Period the moſt Pathetick Language of Surprize and hig wrought Joy!* And all their after converſe ev to Eternity, will be couch'd in the high Strains and Flowers of Heavenly Oratory, w Allelujahs intermix'd.

It much *ſweetneth* the thoughts of Hea to me to remember that there are a multitu of my Friends gone thither; to think ſuch Friend that died at ſuch a time, and ſuch a c at another time (*O! what a number of th con'd I name*) and that all theſe I ſhall meet gain. 'Tis true, *it's a queſtion with ſome whet we ſhall know each other in Heaven* or no? 'tis none with me; for ſurely there ſhall Knowledge ceaſe which now we have, b only that which implyeth our Imperfectio and what Imperfection can this imply? Inde we ſhall not know each other *after the fleſh*, by Stature, Voice, Colour, or outward Sha nor by Terms of Affinity and Conſanguini nor by Youth or Age, *nor I think by Sex*, by the Image of Chriſt and Spiritual Relatio beyond doubt we ſhall know and be know nor is it only my old Friends (ſuch as *Eſſ Ruſſel, Sydney*, &c.) that I ſhall know in H ven, but all the Saints of all Ages, wh Faces in the Fleſh I never ſaw. *Luther* in laſt ſickneſs being ask'd his Judgment whet we ſhall know one another in Heaven, ſwer'd thus, *Quid accidit Adamo? nunquam*

vide

viderat Evam, &c. i. e. How was it with *Adam?* he had never ſeen *Eve*, yet he asketh not who ſhe was, or whence ſhe came, but ſaith, *She is Fleſh of my Fleſh, and Bone of my Bone.* And how knew he that? Why, being indued with the true knowledge of God, he ſo pronounced; after the ſame ſort ſhall we be renewed by Chriſt in another Life. And we ſhall know our Parents, Wives, Children, *&c.* much more perfectly than *Adam* did then know *Eve*. In Heaven we ſhall not only ſee our *Elder Brother Chriſt*, but all our Kindred and Friends that living here in his fear died in his favour, for ſince our Saviour tells us that the Children of the Reſurrection ſhall be ἰσάγγελοι equal to, or like the Angels who yet in the Viſions of *Daniel* and St. *John* appear to be acquainted with each other, ſince in the Parable of the *miſerable Epicure* and the happy Beggar the Father of the Faithful is repreſented, as knowing not only the Perſon and preſent condition, but the paſt ſtory of *Lazarus*: Since the Inſtructer of the Gentiles confidently expects his converted and pious *Theſſalonians to be his Crown at that great day*: Since theſe Arguments, beſides divers others are afforded us by the Scripture, we may ſafely conclude that we ſhall know each other in a place where, ſince nothing requiſite to happineſs can be wanting, we may well ſuppoſe that we ſhall not want ſo great a ſatisfaction as that of being *knowingly happy in our other ſelves, our Friends.*

Luke 20. 36. Luke 16.

Thus far we may venture to ſpeak of the lower Degrees of Cœleſtial Beatitude, the mutual Love and Entertainment of the Bleſſed. But who has ever mounted to the Higheſt Scale of Heavenly Bliſs? Let him come down and tell us the Myſteries wrapt up in Clouds, the Secrets hid within the Veil of Inacceſſible Light! Let him deſcribe the Wonders of the Beatifick Viſion, and ſay how deep the Rivers of Pleaſure are which run by God's Right Hand for evermore! For my Part, I muſt confeſs, I'm loſt in that Abyſs of Wonders, and therefore modeſtly withdraw my Pen to Subjects more *Domeſtick* and within our Reach, and yet even here I ſhall but paſs from *one Abyſs to another*, ſince every Thing has its Depth in it not to be fathom'd by our weightieſt Senſe or moſt ſolid Reaſon.

I have often try'd to dive into the Profundities of Death, but ſtill I find my Intellect too light a Plummet, and the whole *Thread of Life* though ſpun out in fineſt Speculations wou'd ſtill prove far too ſhort to reach that endleſs Bottom.

'Tis true there have been men that have tryed even *in Death it ſelf* to reliſh and taſte it, and who have bent their utmoſt Faculties of Mind to diſcover what *this paſſage is*; but they are none of them come back to tell us the *News*.

——— *No one was ever known to wake,*
Who once in Deaths cold Arms a Nap did take.
Lucret. Lib. 3.

Canius Julius being condemn'd by that *Beaſt Caligula*, as he was going to receive the ſtroke of the Executioner, was askt by *a Philoſopher*, Well *Canius*, ſaid he, whereabout is your Soul now? What is ſhe doing? What are you thinking of? I was thinking, replyed *Canius*, to keep my ſelf ready, and the Faculties of my Mind ſettled and fix'd, to try if in this ſhort and quick inſtant of Death I could perceive the *motion* of the Soul when ſhe parts from the Body, and whether ſhe has any reſentment at the Separation, that I may after come again to acquaint my Friends with it.

So that I fancy there is a certain way by which ſome Men make Trial *what Death is*, but for my own part I cou'd ne're yet find it out.

I have ſometimes thought what would I give for the *leaſt glimpſe* of that inviſible World which the firſt ſtep I take out of this Body will preſent me with, and that there was nothing in the *whole diſcourſe of Death* that I durſt not meet the boldeſt way, and have therefore often attempted to look him full in the Face, that I might learn to die generouſly, but ſtill when it came to the pinch *Conſcience that makes Cowards of us all*, made one of me, and I was forc'd to ſhrink back with ſhame.

Yet

Yet surely the Terrour is not so much in Death it self, as in the *Tragick Pomp* that goes before and after it. The tedious Discipline of Sickness, the formal Visits of Relations and Friends, their melancholy Chat, the frightful *Harangue* of the Physician, and our own dismal Apprehensions compose that horrid Scene which renders Death uncomfortable. When the poor Patient that perhaps may yet *outlive his Fears of Death*, and see Millions drop into the Grave before him, yet dies a Thousand Deaths in his Hag-ridden Phancy, and makes his Bed his Grave by strength of an abus'd Imagination.

'Tis only Fancy gives Death those hideous Shapes we think him in, for indeed Death is no more than a soft and easie Nothing, or rather *Natures play-day*. I firmly think it is no more to die than to be born, we felt no pain coming into the World; nor shall we in the act of leaving it, though in the first one would believe there were more of Trouble than in the latter, for we *cry coming into the World*, but quietly and calmly leave it. What is Death *but a ceasing to be what we were, before we were, we are kindled and put out; to cease to be and not to begin to be is the same thing. Methinks it is but th' other day I came into the World, and anon I am leaving it; for though I am but in my thirtieth year, and at present in perfect health and strength, yet I look upon my self as a man that hath one foot in the Grave already, for* David *says seventy is the Age of man, and I have lived near*

thirty

thirty years of that time already. The longeſt of my deſign's now is not above a years extent, I think of nothing now but ending, take my laſt leave of every place I depart from; *alas! there is no fooling with Life when it is once turn'd beyond thirty. Silence* was a full anſwer of him that being ask'd what he thought of Humane Life, ſaid nothing, turn'd him round and vaniſht. *Oh how Time runs away!* and we are dead e're we have time to think our ſelves alive, *one* doth but Breakfaſt here, another Dine, he that liveth longeſt doth but Sup, we muſt all go to Bed in another World, *therefore good night to you here, and good morrow hereafter.*

Indeed our whole Life is but one often *repeated Step* to Death, and we are as near it at the *firſt Minute* of our ſetting out as at a hundred years end. For Death either keeps an even *Collateral* Pace with us from our very Birth, or at leaſt he marches but *one Step behind us* all the way of our Life; ſo that when the appointed Time is come for him to execute his Commiſſion, he ſoon can reach forth his Hand, arreſt us, and ſtop our further Journey. *Man in the Vigour and Prime of his years,* Phancies himſelf in the midſt of a vaſt Plain; he looks behind him, and numbers all the weary Steps of Life he has already taken, perſwades himſelf that Death muſt alſo meaſure the ſame ſpace of years in his Purſuit, before he can o'retake Him; then turning his Eyes before, he ſees a *bounderleſs Tract*, an indeterminate

minate ſet of years; being thus deluded by the Inchanted Proſpect, he ruſhes on, and bids defiance to pale languid death, imagining he ſees him lagging afar off, at the firſt entrance of all the *wide-ſtretch'd Waſte*, whereas the nimble *Skeleton* is as far advanc'd as he, only keeps out of ſight, and will never be ſeen till the very moment he gives the fatal ſtroke. To whatſoever Light Mans turn his Face, death like his *Shadow*, whips behind Him ſtill, and is at his Back, but ne're will Face him, till the lateſt Gaſp. And he that can ſtoutly bear his Looks for that one Moment, ſhall never ſee him more to all Eternity. 'Tis but the Fear of this one Moments Pain, that makes our Lives ſo uneaſie all along. And I am really aſham'd of this incorrigible Folly of Mortals, who ſpend ſo many years in painful Diſquiſitions how to protract the Pain of *one poor moment*, and undergo ten times more Labour to eſcape it, than they can poſſibly feel in undergoing it. I admire the Reſolution of the *Indian Wives*, who in contempt of Death, ſcorn to ſurvive their Husband's *Funeral* Pile, but with chaſte Zeal, and an undaunted Courage, throw themſelves into the Flames, as if they were then going to the Nuptial Bed. Certainly they calculate aright, who reckon the Day of our Death, the Day of our Nativity, ſince we are then Born to the Poſſeſſion of Immortal Life. For this Reaſon I honour the Memory of *Ludovicus Carteſius* the *Paduan* Lawyer, who in his Laſt Will and Teſta-

Teſtament ordered, that no ſad Funeral Rites ſhould be obſerv'd for Him, but that His Corps ſhould be attended with *Muſick and Joy* to the Grave, and as if it were the Day of his Eſpouſals, he commanded that Twelve Suits of Gay Apparel ſhould be provided inſtead of Mourning for an equal number of Virgins, who ſhould uſher his Body to the Church.

It will not, I hope, be an unpardonable Tranſition, if I *ſtart back* from the melancholy Horrours of *Death*, to the innocent Comforts of *Humane Life*, and from the Immortal Nuptials of this *Italian*, paſs to the Mortal Emblem, the Rites of Matrimony, the Happineſs of *Female Society*, and our Obligations to Women. 'Tis an uncourtly Vertue, which admits of no Proſelytes but Men devoted to Cœlibacy, and he is a Reproach to his Parents, who ſhuns the Entertainments of Hymen, the bliſsful Amours of the Fair Sex, without which he himſelf had not gain'd ſo much as the Poſt of a *Cypher*, in the Numeration of Mankind, though he now makes a Figure too much in Natures Arithmetick, ſince he wou'd put a ſtop to the Rule of *Multiplication*. He is worſe than *Numa Pompilius*, who appointed but a ſet number of Virgins, and thoſe were free to Marry, after they had guarded the Sacred Fires, the Term of four years: VVhereas if his moroſe Example were follow'd, all VVomen ſhould turn *Veſtals* againſt their wills, and be conſecrated to a *peeviſh Virginity* during their Lives. I wonder at the unnatural Phancy of ſuch as could wiſh

we

we might procreate like Trees, as if they were *asham'd of the Act*, without which they had never been capable of such an extravagant Thought, or like *Alphonsus* King of *Spain*, would correct the Institutions of Heaven, and say, Had they been present with God, when he commanded *Adam* and *Eve* to encrease and multiply, they would have propos'd a better method for Generation. Certainly he that Created us, and has riveted the *Love of Women* in the very Center of our Natures, never gave us those passionate Desires to be our incurable Torment, but only as Spurs to our Wit and Vertue, that by the Dexterity of the One and the Integrity of the Other, we might Merit and Gain the *Darling-Object* which should consummate our Earthly Happiness.

I do not patronize the Smoke of those *Dunghill-Passions*, who only court the Possessions of an Heiress, and fall in Love with her Money. *This is to make a Market of Women*, and prostitute the Noblest Affection of our Souls to the sordid Ends of Avarice. Neither do I commend the softer Aims of those, who are wedded only to the *Charming Lineaments* of a Beautiful Face, a clear Skin, or a well shap'd Body. 'Tis only the Vertue, Discretion, and *good Humour* of a Woman could ever captivate me, and I am bless'd in a Mate who has her share both of these and the other exteriour Ornaments.

I hate the Cynical Flout of those who can afford Women no better Title than *Necessary Evils*

Evils, and the lewd Poetical Licence of Him who made this Anagram, *Uxor & Orcus——idem.* That Oratour whisper'd the *Doctrine of Devils*, who said, Were it not for the Company of Women, Angels would come down and dwell among us. I rather think, were it not for such ill-natur'd Fellows as he, Women themselves would prove Angels

'Tis an ungrateful Return, thus to abuse that *Gentle Sex, who are the Moulds in which all the Race of* Adam *are cast*: As if they deserv'd no better Treatment at our Hands, than we usually give to Saffron Bags and Verde Bottles, which are thrown into a Corner, when the Wine and Spice are taken out of them. The Pagan Poet was little better than a Murderer, who allow'd but two good Hours to a VVoman.

Τὴν μὲν ἐν θαλάμῳ, τὴν δὲ ἐν θανάτῳ.
Unam in Thalamo, alteram in Tumulo.

For my Part, I should esteem the VVorld but a *Desert*, were it not for the Society of the Fair Sex; and the most Polished Part of Mankind wou'd appear but like Hermits in Masquerade, or a kind of *Civilized Satyrs*, so imperfect and unaccomplish'd is our Virility, without the Reunion of our *lost Rib*, that Substantial and Integral Part of our Selves. Those who are thus disjoynted from VVomen, seem to inherit *Adam's Dreams*, out of which nothing can awake them, but the Embraces of

their

their own living Image, the Fair Traduct of the first Metamorphosis in the VVorld, *Bone converted into Flesh*. They are always in Slumbers and Trances, ever separated from themselves, in *a wild Pursuit* of an intolerable Loss, nor can any thing fix their Volatile Desires, but the powerful Magnetism of some Charming *Daughter of Eve*. These are the Centers of all our Desires and VVishes, the true *Pandoras* that alone can satisfie our longing Appetites, and fill us with *Gifts and Blessings*, *in them we live before we breathe*, and when we have tasted the *Vital Air*, 'tis but to die an amorous Death, that we may live more pleasantly in them again. *They are the Guardians of our Infancy, the Life and Soul of our Youth, the Companions of our Riper Years, and the Cherishers of our Old Age.* From the Cradle to the Tomb, we are wrapt in a Circle of Obligations to them for their Love and good Offices. And he is a Monster in Nature who returns them not the Caresses of an *Innocent* Affection, the Spotless Sallies of Vertue and Gratitude. *Love is the Soul of the World*, the Vital Prop of the Elements, 'tis the Cement of Humane Society, the strongest Fence of Nature. Earth would be a Hell without it, neither can there be any Heaven where this is absent.

Yet I am no *Advocate for those general Lovers*, who not content to let this active Passion run within the lawful Channel of chast Marriage, swell it up with irregular Tides, and wanton Flouds of Lust, till it wash away the

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nks of Reaſon and Morality, find out new aſſages and Rivulets, encroaching on other Mens Poſſeſſions, or at leaſt dilating on the geeral waſte of the weaker Sex, who ought to be as Gardens enclos'd, or holy Ground not to be prophan'd by the Acceſs of every bold Intruder.

I approve not the Inceſtuous Mixtures of the *Chineſe* where the Brother Marries the Siſter, or next a-kin; nor the Senſual Latitude of the *Mahometans*, who allow every Man four Wives, and as many Concubines as he can maintain. But above all I deteſt the wild and Brutal Liberty of that *Philoſopher*, who in his Idea of Humane Happineſs, conceiv'd a promiſcuous Copulation *ad Libitum* to be a neceſſary Ingredient of our Bliſs.

On the Other ſide, My Regards to that *Sex* are not circumſcrib'd within ſuch narrow Limits, as to exclude any from our Converſation and Friendſhip, that by any warrantable Title can lay a Juſt Claim to it; I wou'd have our Commerce with Females *as General* as is their Number that deſerve it, whoſe Knowledge and Vertue will be a ſufficient ſecurity from *criminal Familiarities*, and from the Scandals of the World. There are among that Sex as among Men, Good and Bad, Vertuous and Vicious, and a Prudent Man will ſo level his Choice, as not to ſtain his Reputation, or hazard his Integrity. 'Tis no ſmall Point of Diſcretion, I own, to *regulate our Friendſhips with Women*, and to walk evenly on the Borders

and very *Ridge of a Paſſion*, whoſe next Step a Precipice of Flames not kindled from t Altar of Vertue. However, 'tis not impoſ ble to *conſerve Innocency, on the Frontiers of Ha There is no Difference of Sex among Souls*, an Maſculine Spirit may inhabit a Womans Bo It is diſingenuous to rob Vertue of the Adv tages it receives from Beauty, which make appear like Diamonds enchac'd in Gold, gives it a greater Luſtre. *Reaſon it ſelf will pear more Eloquent in the Mouth of a fair Mi than in that of the moſt Florid Orator*: A there are no Figures in all the Syſtem of Rh torick ſo moving and forcible as the *peculi Graces of that Sex*. I am of Opinion that Me can boaſt of no Endowments of the Min which Women poſſeſs not in as great, if not greater Eminency. There have been *Maſ as well as Amazons*, and no Age or Nation bu has produced ſome Females Renowned fo their Wiſdom or Vertue. Which makes me conclude that the Converſation of Women i no leſs uſeful than pleaſant, and that the Dan gers which attend their Friendſhips and Com merce, are recompenſed by vaſt Advantages.

But whatever may be adduced againſt th *Friendſhips* we contract with Women, there i not in all the *Magazine* of *Detraction* any Wea pon of Proof againſt the mutual Intimacies o our *own Sex, the generous Endearments of Soul truely Maſculine and Vertuous, united by Sympa thies and Magnets whoſe Root is in Heaven*. No Panegyricks can reach the Worth of theſe Di-

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vine Engagements, since they admit not of any Mediocrity, but derive their *Value only from their Excess.* I have been always slow and cautious in contracting Amities, lest I should run the Risque of his Mistake, who while he thought he had an Angel by the Hand, held the Devil by the Foot: But where I have once *plac'd* my Affection, I love without Reserve or Rule. I never entertain without suspicion the warm Professions of Love, which some Men are apt to make at first sight. Such *Mush-room-Friendships* have no deep Root, and therefore most commonly wither as soon as they are form'd. Yet I deny not, but that there are some *secret Marks* and Signatures which Souls ordain'd for Love and Friendship can read in each other at a Glance, by which that Noble Passion is excited, that afterwards displays it self in more apparent Characters. This is the *silent Language* of Platonick Love, wherein the Eye supplies the Office of the Tongue; 'Tis the *Rhetorick of Amorous Spirits* wherein they make their Court without a Word. There are some lasting Friendships which owe their Birth to such an Interview, but their Growth and Fastness proceeds from other Circumstances, being cherish'd by frequent Conversation, repeated good Offices, and an inviolate Fidelity, which are the only proper and substantial Aliment of Love. 'Tis impossible to fix a durable Friendship, where-ever we place a *Transient Inclination*, because of the insuperable Necessities which divide particular Men

from each Others Commerce or Knowledge after they have begun to Love. In the Orb of this Life Men are like the Planets, which now and then cast friendly Aspects on each other *en Passant*: But following the Motion of the Greater Sphere of Providence, they are again separated, their Influences dissolved and new Amours commenc'd. But I would have my Friendship, resemble the *Fixed Stars* and Constellations, who in the Eternal Revolution never part Company or Interests.

I have ever look'd on those Men to be but *one step differenc'd from Beasts*, whose Love is confined only to their own Families or Kindred. Such a narrow Affection deserves not to be rank'd in the *Predicament of Humanity*. My Love is communicative. it makes a large Progress, and extends it self to Strangers, it takes in Men of different Humours and Complexions, Customs and Languages, it refuses none that have the *Face of Men*, but with wide-open'd Arms embraces all that bear the stamp of Humane Nature. And I have this *peculiar in my Temper*, that I find not the least Reluctancy in loving and doing Good to my *Enemies*. That which costs others so much Labour and Toil to perswade themselves to, is to me as familiar and easie, as to laugh at a ridiculous Object, and I esteem it not so properly a Vertue in my Self, as a Gift of Nature, the Effect of my Constitution.

Yet I cannot pretend to such an *universal Spirit*, as to be without my *Antipathies*. I esteem

eem Hatred to be as neceſſary and allowable Paſſion as Love, provided it be exercis'd on its proper Objects, ſince as the One faſtens us to thoſe Things which procure our Happineſs, the Other ſnatches us from what would be the Cauſe of our Miſery. I obſerve, that theſe *contrary Faculties* are inherent in all Creatures, neither could the Creation ſubſiſt, were it not for the Diſcords as well as the Agreements of the Elements. The whole Univerſe ſubſiſts by the *Oppoſition of its Parts*, and the Epitome of it, our Microcoſm is preſerv'd by its *inteſtine* Diviſions. So that I cannot apprehend a more immediate Way for the Supreme Architect to overthrow his Works, than by diffuſing that *Nepenthe* through the Elements, which ſhould compoſe their Quarrels, for they wou'd no ſooner ceaſe to hate their *Contraries*, but they wou'd alſo deſiſt from loving themſelves, and having thus loſt the Cement which faſtens them together in this exquiſite Order, they muſt neceſſarily return to their Primitive Chaos out of which they were extracted.

However I will not from theſe *innocent Feuds of inanimate Creatures* draw Arguments to countenance in my ſelf a Hatred which is Criminal, being aſſured that among thoſe *various Averſions* which moleſt the Quiet of Men, there is hardly one which is not againſt Reaſon or Morality. Every Creature bears in its Eſſence the ſtamp of Infinite Goodneſs; and 'twere groſs Impiety to calumniate any of thoſe Works, on which God Himſelf has beſtow'd

an *universal Panegyrick*, when he pronounc'd them all to be Good. They are all lovely in their Order, and those which our Squeamish Phancies esteem the most odious, have Qualities which claim our Love and Admiration. Those *venemous Creatures* which we shun as the inveterate Enemies of our Race, deserve our Caresses instead of our Spight, since the Service they afford us, equals the Hurt we receive from them, and the most Efficacious Medicines are sometimes compounded of the *fiercest Poysons*. In strict speaking, the *Devils* themselves are not the Object of my Hatred, according to their Essence, though they are so by the Malice of their Will. They still retain their *Natural Perfections*, and the Goodness of their Essence remains the same as it was before their Fall. Their Vigour, Beauty, and Intellectual Accomplishments, have suffered no Detriment from the Depravedness of their Affections, but remain untouch'd, as when they *shone among the Hierarchies above*. And though God detests and punishes them for their Crimes, yet he Himself loves and *conserves their Essence*. There is Nothing therefore in *Heaven, Earth or Hell* but Sin that deserves our Hatred; with all things else we may be enamour'd; and we ought to hate this Monster so much the more, in that by disordering our Natures, it has planted in us those *Antipathies* and Aversions which make us peevish at the Works of God, and hate those Things which we ought to love.

But among all the *Species of Hatred*, I tremble at that which is exercis'd against our own Race, because I find none so violent, none so inexorable as one Man against another. They are not content with the most furious Sallies of this Passion during their Lives, but to consummate the Height of their Malice, they willingly involve themselves in Death. With *Atreus* they take Delight in their own Ruine, provided *Thyestes* may be crush'd in it too. Nay this Passion is *Immortal*, and descends into the very Grave. The Antipathies of *Eteocles* and *Polenius* were translated to the other World, their Hatred *surviv'd their Breath*, it liv'd in their Ashes, and wou'd not suffer their divided Flames to mix in the same Funeral Pile. Above all I abhor the *Italians* inflexible Cruelty, who bequeath their Hatred as an Inheritance to their Children, adjuring them to Eternal Enmity, with Curses on such of their Off-spring as shall ever make Peace with their Foes.

I quarrel not with that *Logick*, by which we call a Toad venemous. 'Twou'd prove but a thin *Sophistry* that shou'd impose on us the Safety of the Experiment; and I doubt our best *Metaphysicks* wou'd make but a weak Antidote against the Force of its Poyson. I am not fond of *quibbling* my self into so dangerous an Absurdity under the Protection of a refin'd Theory, whose Practice wou'd convince me of a foolish Madness, and that I were neither good Philosopher nor Divine. Yet I cannot

say I hate even this Creature which is become the Proverb of Humane Hatred: For as much as it carries with it, in its Life and Motion, the Character and Impression of a *Divine Artifice*, especially for this reason, that we have no cause to believe it ever sinned, and consequently thereupon maintains and performs the end and design of its Creation, which tho' it be in a lower Sphere, has this Prerogative beyond Mankind; that it never yet transgress'd the Rules, nor violated the Laws of its Maker. Nor can I imagine whence our Reflections upon such Creatures should arise, but from a mistaken Knowledge of our selves, and a perfect Ignorance of the Nature of all things beside. 'Tis under the Prejudice of Education, and the prevailing Influence of Custom that we labour, and to which we owe the greatest and most detected Errors of our Life. Have not some People liv'd upon that, and deliciously too, that is another Man's Poyson? Did not *Mithridates* take Poyson till the strongest Confection of that kind would not do his business when he wanted it? 'Tis to that we are to ascribe the Mischiefs of Humane Life. For if we could once forsake the *false Guide* we have been us'd to, and consult our own Reason there's nothing would seem strange to us, nothing uneasie, nothing dreadful. Therefore after I have a little Descanted upon this Subject, in order to Rectifie our Judgments and Reform our Practices, I shall cross the Cudgels, and end this Discourse.

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It is impossible fully to set forth the large Dominion and uncontrolable Power of *Custom* and common *Usage*, together with the vast and long *Series* of *Difficulties and Mistakes* we lye liable and expos'd unto upon that account. 'Tis the Master of the Mint, and *Coins Words and Names* for things according to its own pleasure, sometimes not at all expressive of the Nature of the thing intended; which have no further signification than what they obtain by repeated use and frequency. We know very well that nothing in its own Nature is *accidental*, and in respect of the Supreme Author all things are Regular and Designed; but in Reference to us whose *purblind Reason* can reach no deeper than the Outside, whose Sight is not sharp enough to Dive and Penetrate into the Causes of things, many things prove fortuitous. When Events strange and unexpected fall out, such as we had not the least apprehension or suspicion of before-hand, we call it *Chance and Accident*. But the Misery is we Terminate there, and never look to the hand that Order'd it. We attribute that to *Fortune* which is the Effect of a Wise and Skilful *Agent*. When our Expectations are baulk'd, and our Aims frustrated, we cry 'twas done by chance and think that's all. Whereas we ought to consider that God oftentimes delights to make our *Wisdom Foolishness*, and thereby gives us caution not to trust our own Foresight; since the Events of all things are in his Power and at his Disposal. He will be *Ey'd in his Providence*, and make Men know

that the Succeſs of all their Undertakings is at his Diſcretion. That he is the Sole Governor of the World: That he will be ſought unto for his Bleſſing, and that we muſt wait his Pleaſure and aſcribe the Glory of all to Him. But this ought not to Encourage us in a Supine and Slothful Negligence; That becauſe God does all things according to the Good Pleaſure of his Will, we have nothing to do, but expect he ſhou'd bring things about for Advantage and Satisfaction. For tho' *Grace* loves to *magnifie* it ſelf in the *Weak*, and exerts its Efficacy in mean and contemptible Subjects, yet that's no Ground for us to ſtand *Idle*, or ſit *whining* and bewailing our Misfortunes, and think *God* ſhou'd bear our burden himſelf. No, theſe Remarkable Efforts of the *Divine* Power are to Encourage our Stedfaſtneſs, and confirm us in the belief of its undoubted Preſence, when our Deſigns and Endeavours are conformable. It is Impertinent and Ridiculous to expect Relief from others, when we are wholly unactive to procure it our ſelves. We ought to make uſe of the beſt Means he affords us, and then Reſigning our ſelves up to him attend the Succeſs. If it be according to our Deſires we muſt gratefully acknowledge, and thank him for it: If contrary, we muſt in all Humility ſubmit, confeſſing his *Wiſdom* infinitely to exceed *ours*, and that he knows what is better for us than we our ſelves. This is what *Divinity* teaches us, and cou'd we be inſtructed by it, might greatly advance our Peace and Tranquillity in this World.

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This is a ſtrain of Prudence, I know, Mankind can hardly be Skrew'd up to. The Infirmity of Humane Nature is ſuch, that every Shock of unexpected Adverſity makes it ſtagger: We are ready to turn *Recreants*, and yield the day to every puny Evil, that unlook'd for attacks us. 'Tis well if we can ſupport *our Spirits* and preſerve our Courage againſt a fore-ſeen Danger; but to be *ſurpriz'd* by a Misfortune is to be *Overcome*. I am of Opinion the *Combat* would not be Difficult, nor the *Victory* Uncertain, were we but better acquainted with *our ſelves*; and knew our own ſtrength, and how to apply our ſelves to the *Work*. Some torment themſelves with *Diſtracting* Apprehenſions aforehand, and *doubly* poſſeſs their Miſery in *Reality* and *Fancy*. Others immediately ſink under the Weight as ſoon as they feel it on their *Shoulders*. Others fly out into *Deſpair*, as if the World were at an End, and they were *never* to ſee a good Day again. For my part, as I cannot altogether boaſt of *Inſenſibility*, under my afflictions at *preſent*; ſo neither can I complain of being too *Apprehenſive* of them at *diſtance*. I can ſee the *Cloud* gathering without much *Conſternation*, and comfort my ſelf with this, that perhaps ſome Wind or other may blow it away, or I am not Infallibly ſure it ſhall break on my Head. I ſhall have enough of it whenever it comes and do not ſo much provide to *avoid* it, as conſider of what Importance it may be whether I *eſcape* it or no. Perhaps 'tis my *Fault*, but I am willing to indulge it. I have no other Means. I can conſider

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it without too *much concern*. I approach it without *Horror*. I bring it home to *my self*, and treat with it as *Present*, when perhaps it may never come to pass I inure my self to it, and harden my self in it, by which means it becomes familiar to me, That when it overtakes me I claim *Acquaintance* with it. This *dulls* the Edge, and *blunts* the Sting of an Affliction; which otherwise it may be I should never be able to *sustain*.

But let us Examine *Reason*, and see what Arms she can furnish us with for our Defence, against these Violent Assaults. *She* would in a great measure do our Business for us, could we take *her* advice, and were there not *private* Enemies *within*, that compel us to Surrender before we try our Strength. If our *Passions* were Disarmed and Subdued, and brought into Obedience to *Reason*, we might maintain our Ground with less Difficulty, and *bid* Defiance to *Fortune*. This ought to be the *Subject* of our Courage. In this we shall appear more than *Conquerors*. Let us stop these *beginnings* and our Business is soon done. Nothing in Nature can be more Tumultuous and Irregular than our own Passions. And with what Face can any Man pretend to withstand the sudden and violent attempts of *Fortune*, that has no Guard against the inward and unruly motions of his own *Soul*? Whither do we see some People hurried, by the precipituous Streams of *Anger*, *Love*, *Hatred*, &c. even upon a bare Apprehension and Jealousie, without the least Discovery of Cause or Motive? I have seen the Accidental breaking of a *Glass*, the loss of a *Groat*,

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transport some to such a *Degree*, that they could hardly Compose and Recover themselves for *six* hours after. They fall foul upon all without Distinction, all Company must be Disturb'd where-ever they come, 'tis impossible to give a calm uninterrupted answer to any thing that is ask'd them. They Stamp, Stare, Burn, Rave, Fret, Roar, as if the *Day* of *Judgment* was at hand, and they were a going *Quick* to Pluto. Wherefore do you wring your Hands? Why are those Tears? Why look you so Discontented? You have lost your best *Friend*. A dear Relation. You are afraid you shall be *Poor*. The *Wheel* is come upon you. You cannot see how your Estate will hold out, and know not how to Live when that is gone. *Poor Wretch!* The plain truth is you have lost your Reason. What is become of your Religion, your Faith, your Confidence? Is this the upshot of all your talk of relying on Providence, of trusting God? Do you not *Belye* your selves? Is he not Able? Is he not Willing? Why are you not *Calm*? Why are you not *Quiet*? They may talk as long as they please, but it must be somewhat more than a few fine Words, and pathetical Expressions, that must convince me of the sincerity of their Profession, who Distrust Providence upon every slender occasion. *Are not these brave men, think you? Grace* delights to Accompany a Vigorous and Active Soul, and carries it out to perform Atchievements beyond its own strength and above its hopes, but unless our *Endeavours* comport with our *Words*, Providence disdains us as unworthy of his Care. What

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does that Souldier deserve that brags of singly Conquering whole *Armies*, and turns his *Back* at the first Charge; nay, runs away perhaps before the Enemy is in view, thro' a slavish despair of his own ability to resist? *Our whole Life is a Warfare.* We have many Adversaries to Encounter. Some *face* us in the *open* Field, and give us leisure to prepare, and require a fixt and determinate resolution to oppose them. Some surprize us between the *Hedge* and the Ditch, as they say, and expect we should be perpetually armed and upon our *Watch.* These are *Trials* sent on purpose to evidence our Constancy, and if we bear up manfully, our Courage shall be *seconded* and fortified with an *Almighty* assistance. Yet it is a common Observation, that none are more apt to repine, than such whose *tongues* can run nimbly in *matters* of this nature.

To what purpose then should we torment our selves and others? And seeing we are *unable* to govern our selves or our Affairs, why do we not deliver up our selves to the *Conduct* of him who Governs the World? Why do we macerate our Souls and Bodies when our vain Imaginations become successless and ineffectual? Since there is a Wise and Intelligent Moderator, who will bring things about according to the Methods of his own *superlative* Wisdom, in defiance of Humane *Crafts* and Policy. We may lay the *Scheme* of our Affairs as rationally as we can devise, and back it with our utmost power and diligence, and then we have satisfied our *Office* and done our Duty, for in spite of all, the *Issue* and Result of all must finally and arbitrarily depend upon the absolute Will and Pleasure of another.

I am perswaded *Custom* and *Example*, lead us into more Errors and Mistakes than any thing else beside. I find we submit to them with great ease and little reluctance. Nay, and think our selves very excusable in all the *slips* we make when we follow that *Guide*. Our very Dispositions, methinks, and natural Inclinations are subdued by them. And

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in many things drawn to a compliance, even againſt their own *Biaſs*. They *Habituate* us to Actions, however Ungrateful and Diſreliſhing at their firſt appearance, and aſſiſt us to perform them with *Smoothneſs* and *Facility*. I find the Path *rugged* when I am out of my uſual *way*, and we are contented to *jogg* on, quietly in a *wrong* Road, rather than put our ſelves to the Trouble of finding out the *right*. 'Tis *Brutiſh* and Unmanly not to examine what we do, and to be able to give no better account of our Actions, than that it is the *Cuſtom* of the *Place*. To what purpoſe ſerve our rational and diſcerning Faculties, if we ſuſpend their Exerciſe, and not ſuffer them to have their *Play* in their natural and proper *Relations*? Why ſhou'd we debaſe our own Judgments by a ſlaviſh ſubmiſſion to common uſage. I then fruſtrate the end of my Being, for one of the main buſineſſes I have *here* is to acquire the *knowledge of my ſelf*. And 'tis for my own Actions I ſhall be immediately accountable, and not thoſe of other men. *Example*, I confeſs, may be of great uſe, but then it muſt be manag'd according to *diſcretion*. It may ſerve as a *Caution* but never as a *Rule*: It may be admitted into *Council*, but not entruſted with the *Government*. It may prove an Excellent *Monitor*, but a very wretched *Dictator*. Nor when thus qualified and circumſcribed can it be of any advantage to us, without a previous knowledge and underſtanding of our ſelves. 'Tis the *Wiſe man* only, that knows his own ſtrength, that ſhall uſe it with ſucceſs. And as ſuch an one has leſs need of it; ſo he ſhall be further removed from its Inſinuating and Uſurping *Dominion*.

I wou'd therefore begin firſt with *my ſelf*, ranſack my own Soul, and exactly know its frame and conſtitution. I wou'd *muſter* my own forces firſt, and *dive* into the truth of things, and put my Underſtanding upon the Exerciſe of its Function, and give my Judgment its full *ſwing*. Truth ſhall be the Subject of my *Diſquiſition*, and the End of my *Enquiry*.

If we look into the *behaviour* and practice of moſt men, we ſhall find *Fancy* to have the *Aſcendant* over them. The *Dread* of not ſucceeding ſhakes their *Reſolutions*. They are *Timorous* and *Inconſtant* becauſe they neither know *Themſelves*, nor what they wou'd be at. Every unſuſpected Danger ſcares them out of their Wits. They create *Monſters* in their own *Brains*, and ſuppoſing them above their ſtrength

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to resist, they *slavishly* resign the little Reason they wou[ld] seem to be *Masters* of to every *uncommon* Evil, not known how to withstand or avoid it. It behoves me then to Exa[mine] the tendency of my own Desires, and see whether a[ny] ny thing *Substantial* hath affected my mind. Hath any m[an] met with any thing that gives him a full and compleat [sa]tisfaction. Or does he not find his Passions and Appetite[s] encrease upon him, and require somewhat more, even [in] the very Possession and Enjoyments of their Objects? W[hy] penetrate no deeper than the *Surface*, and acquiesce in a *Superficial* Glance. We ought therefore to come out of the *Dark*, that we may see to walk in the *Light*. We must *unlearn*, what we *think* we know, to be taught what we ought to know. *The first advance towards Wisdom is to renounce our Folly.* Our Minds can never be filled with sound and wholsom Knowledge, till they are first Dispossest of their Prejudices.

I hate to hear People cry out, Why cannot I do *thus* and *thus*: Why cannot I manage an Affair like this or that man? I'le tell you, because you are a Fool, and do not *know yourself*: Because you cannot be contented as you are. Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction under a Mans *present* condition, is an affirm'd and manifest proof he would carry himself as *unhandsomly* in *another*. Nature and Providence has *allotted* every man his *Task*, and that which is most *suitable* to him. He that cannot *Govern* a *Shuttle* would make an Improper *Commander* of a Man of *War*. It would, I profess, make a Man laugh till he expires, to come into a *Coffee-house*, and behold a *Pack* of *Cits* prating of *Politicks* and *State Affairs*, as if they were all *Machiavels* and *Mazarins*. Had I been the *King*, *says one*, that has not Wit enough to commend him for a *Rat-catcher*, I wou'd have done *Thus*. Had I been in Council cries another, I wou'd never have advised *That*. *Doating Coxcombs!* Why don't ye Regulate your *Families*? Why do you suffer your *Wives* to wear the *Breeches*? Why do your *Daughters* run away with the *Bullies*? And your *Prentices* get to Bed to their *Mistresses*? Amend your selves first, Correct your *Domestick* Exorbitancies, *Exemplifie your Prudence* in Rectifying your private Affairs. Deal faithfully in your Trades, and become honest Men, and then you shall have leave to

Prate.

prate. I have often considered with my self, what should be the reason Men are so often disappointed of their Ends, and baulk'd in their Hopes? They undertake more than they can answer for, and by a ridiculous presumption, enter upon Business they can never accomplish. It is Ignorance that is the ground of all our Miscarriages, and *Pride* puts us upon Attempts too weighty for our *Shoulders*. They are *Twin-Sisters*, and the latter is a Natural Companion of the former. We have every one of us within our own proper *Sphere*, more work cut out than we know well how to affect: Which one Consideration, could it but duely take place, wou'd be of force enough to discourage us from loading our Shoulders with unnecessary Burdens.

I am confident nothing more betrays the *Weakness* and *Infirmity* of Humane Nature, than *Impatience* under our present Circumstances, and a sinful Curiosity of prying into the Affairs of others. 'Tis the Employment of a weak understanding, and a Soul wholly unacquainted with it self, to be impetuously hurried with a desire after things altogether beyond our proper Province. Surely Nature hath better provided for us, than we can for our selves; and did we but *Regularly* follow her Dictates, we should not be so often compell'd to our shifts. But the mischief is, we are too much prone to *Admire* every thing we do not possess. A *Vanity intolerable!* Which did it not shroud it self under the Covert of *Custome*, wou'd soon be ab-

hor'd and baniſh'd out of the World. B
Common Practice is become its *Advocate*, and
reſiſtibly pleads its defence in a vulgar *Judicatur*
Should we not think a *Neighbour crack'd* on o
ſide of his Head, who would entertain us
hour or two together, with an exact and a
curate *Deſcription* of ſome Foreign Countre
when all the while he does not know the wa
to his own Pariſh Church? *Prepoſterous ma*
neſs! to pretend to know every thing, an
yet be totally Ignorant of our ſelves.

It is enough already, that I have lived fo
others. Let me at laſt return home, and d
ſomewhat for my ſelf. Time flies away, Na
ture decays, and I ſhall ſoon find my ſe
moſt unfit for the Work, when I ſhall ſtan
moſt in need of ſtrength to do it. To wha
purpoſe is it, we are ſo buſily concern'd
Exotick Affairs, things neither conſiſte
with our *preſent* Peace, nor conducive to ou
future Happineſs?

When I take a review, and give my min
leave (as ſhe would often do, did I not im
pertinently divert her) to Recollect her ow
Thoughts, and make a ſerious Reflection
the *Employments* and *Enjoyments* too of h
paſt life. Good God! how full of Vani
and Inquietude, and diſſatisfaction do they a
pear? As enforces from me a *Subſcription*
this *Fatal* Truth; that it is I my ſelf th
have prevented my own happineſs, and by
ſenſeleſs Extravagance, and ſtupid Self-Ign
rance, undermined the Tranquility of a *Le*
f th

hat might have been more *Peaceable*, and onſequently more *pleaſant*, than the preſent oſpect of any Circumſtances now warrant me o expect. I could now almoſt Hate, and urſe my ſelf, as to my *Folly*, and *Self-Love* ſelf, would juſtifie my Indignation. But hat is not the Way, and Prudence ſuggeſts nother Courſe. Let me therefore at leaſt reſerve what I enjoy, if I cannot Recover what I have loſt. Let the conſideration of what is paſt, awaken my diligence for the *Future*. We have been Fools, and who has not? Let Wiſdome make amends and Cancel the *Shame*. I have learn'd at leaſt, this by the Bargain, to know my Diſtemper, which makes the Cure leſs difficult. There is ſomewhat of *Good* to be extracted from every thing: And Preſcriptions in appearance contrary, have Eventually proved themſelves *Friendly* to Nature.

To do our own proper buſineſs, and to know *our ſelves*, is the only important Employment we have in this World. And he that can do the *latter*, will never be at a loſs in the *former*. He will avoid all ſuperfluous Undertakings. He can tell how to Reform the Extravagance of his Paſſions, and correct the Impetuoſity of an *hot* Nature. He will never be obliged to Proſecute the Concerns of *Another*, while any thing of his own lies on his Hands. Every thing he Engages in ſhall be brought to perfection; becauſe he attempts no more than he *underſtands*, and is able to Accompliſh. This Conſideration wou'd

fix our Thoughts, reſtrain and bridle our Paſſions, and limit our Fancies within their Bounds.

It has been my Obſervation ever ſince I have been acquainted in the World, That moſt Men are *ſtrays*, they are guilty of a perpetual Paſſ, and a *Clauſum fregit* may be charg'd upon us *all*. We ſee how fooliſh and impertinent ſoever Men ordinarily are, yet they obſerve *Decorum*, and put a conſtraint upon their Words and Actions, when they are in the Company of Perſons reputed *Wiſe*, and *Good*: And an Affront put upon them before *ſuch*, will be more highly Reſented, than if they were all of their own *Stamp* and *Rank*. So ſhou'd we learn to be acquainted, and reverence our *ſelves*, and dare to think and ſpeak nothing in our own Preſence, we ſhould be aſhamed of before a *Solomon* or a *Cato*. Let us then for once become our own Maſters: Let us conſult our *ſelves*, and take advice of our *Reaſon*: 'Tis ſhe alone will inſtruct us, not only what we have to do, but alſo govern us in the management of our Actions, with much leſs ſollicitude, and much more facility. The Soveraignty is her *Due*, our *Paſſions* are her *Slaves*, and ſhe ought to have the *Principal*, if not the *only* Concurrence in all our Attempts. Leave the Buſineſs wholly to her, and you ſhall find ſhe will render the Event at leaſt excuſable, let it be what it will.

How vain is it thus to *ſhun* our ſelves, and follow the *multitude!* That Man muſt certainly

ly deserve *Bedlam*, who employs all his time in examining the Estates of others, and values himself for knowing the particular Concerns of the Noblest *Families* of the Nation, when yet he is a *Stranger* to what passes under his own *Roof*, and can never find leisure to adjust his own *private* Accounts. For my part, I am ashamed of my self, That little knowledge I have acquired of my own Temper, if so much as to let me know the necessity I have of knowing more. It is difficult for us to arrive at any tollerable Information of *anothers* Humour, and to give a just and regular Estimate of him; we must follow him close, pursue all his Windings, and Turnings, trace him through all his Variations, Forms, and Appearances. Thus we must do with *our selves*, nor is the Labour quite so perplext. Mankind is all *Labyrinth*, and *Disguise*, and never shows the same Face two hours together. I know my self better than all the Men in the World know me, and can be more just and faithful, according to Truth, in my Judgment and Censure. They set up a *Rule*, and try all Complexions and Temperaments by *That*, wildly, unreasonably, and uncertainly. I daily find them miserably out in their Conjectures of me, even those who think they best know me. They may frame a general *Air* of my Humour, by a frequent Conversation, but are wonderfully mistaken in their Application, as to the Ends, Inducements, and Motives of most of my Actions.

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The moſt ſtupid *Soul* that is, will ſometimes *work* upon her ſelf, review her own Thoughts and Inclinations, and would delight to be more Converſant in this Exerciſe, if we did not interrupt her Meditation by the Propoſal of external Objects, which do not at all concern her. It is the beſt Acquaintance we can have, and would deal more faithfully and wiſely in her Adviſements than the beſt Friend we know upon Earth. It is, I am confident, the want of this Intelligence that occaſions all the Irregularities and Diſorders we are *guilty* of. Remember to make *Reaſon* and *Conſcience* of your *Party*, and you will ſoon perceive your Anxiety, and Torment abated. Then ſhould we not only be *Wiſe*, but in a great meaſure *Happy* to boot: And for ought I know in as high a Degree as humane Nature is capable of attaining. For the greateſt part of our *Felicity*, as I take it, in this Life, is placed in a due management of our Afflictions, or the intire *Dominion* and *Monarchy* of Reaſon over our *Paſſions*. It is a prejudicate Opinion, begot by *Example*, fomented by *Education*, and inveterate by *Cuſtom*, which has infected our Minds and debauch'd our Palates, that we can reliſh nothing according to it's true, and natural *Taſte*. For the Objects we converſe with, have for the moſt part an *indifferent* inclination to *Good*, or *Evil*, and operate upon us only after the judgment we make of them. We are *Maſters* of every thing before us, and a *wiſe* Man hath an admirable *Dexterity* of drawing *Sweetneſs*

from

rom what *others* call a *Calamity*: And makes ll the Injuries of Fortune, ſerve his Deſigns, nd further his Advancement. They are ge- erally Men of weak Spirits, who are deject- d with *Adverſity*, or exalted with *Proſperity*. And who is either way affected with theſe things, gives a ſtrong Argument of his *Imbeci- ity*, that he knows not how to live *agreeable* o either *Nature*, or *Reaſon*. Will any Man Glory in another Man's Excellencies, and va- lue himſelf, becauſe his Neighbour has a Houſe better furniſhed than his own? The Caſe is the ſame. Whatſoever is in the Power of *Fortune*, belongs not to us. We ought no more to be concern'd at her Contempts, than elevat- ed with her Favours. She is a capricious *God- deſs*, and the Frailty of Mankind is the ſubject of her Humour. She ſwells a *Bubble* with *Pride*, and breaks it with *Scorn*. Whoever truſts her, does but Treaſure up to himſelf an abundant, and *inexplicable* Matter of Diſcontent and Per- turbation.

I could (in ſome fits of contemplative Melan- choly,) fall aſleep as ſoon in a Church-Yard as on my Bed; and am often ſo weary of dull Life, that my greateſt delight is in ſuch *Objects* as ſpeak moſt to it's *advantage*.

I know that I carry *a Ghoſt* always about me, and that I my ſelf am *a Walking Spirit*. This thought allays in me thoſe vulgar *Fears* of the haunts and viſits of *Spectres*. And as I am not at all afraid of my ſelf, ſo I am very little ap- prehenſive of *Apparitions*: Nay more, I could

with

wish the *Communications* more frequent betwi[xt] *us* and the *Inhabitants* of the *Upper World*: would harden our *Christian Courage*, familiari[se] to us the Thoughts of *Separation*, and crea[te] in us a more passionate love of the *Heaven[ly] Country*.

I pretend not by the *Title* of this small Tre[a]tise to any extraordinary *Scheme* or new *draught* of Religion for Men of my own Profession; much less would I be thought slighly to sug[-] gest any neglect or deficiency of theirs in the Practice of the *Old*: I am very well assur'd that *Religio Bibliopolæ* seems a direct *Tautologie*. But surely it can be no Offence to say, that I could wish we were all more in earnest for *Heaven*, and that we had all the Wildome and Vertue that ever appeared in the *guise* of true Reason in the World, summ'd up and amassed in a *Christian Book-seller*; especially in a daily, sincere contempt of this World.

No eager pursuit, or restless intemperate de[-] sire of Wealth or Honour, must be harboured by us, who are to fix our whole hopes *on another Country*; and we should confess our selves *Strangers* and *Pilgrims* on this Earth, by the Precepts and Examples of all the *Holy Prophets* and *Apostles* throughout the whole Book of God. To set any extraordinary *value on the World*, is to unravel the peculiar Principle of Christianity, and *run retrograde* to the steps of the *Holy Jesus*.

FINIS.